edition since it first came out in 1962. However, as the book has undergone some significant changes it is perhaps worth commenting about its role and present value in the current climate of neurology.

In this edition the original author has adopted a younger colleague and he modestly writes that having repeatedly revised and rewritten a book over more than a quarter of a century "one realises one is getting a bit long in the tooth and new blood needs to be infused into its veins". As the authors say in the preface there are few changes in the technique of neurological examination but the interpretation of findings on examination and the relative importance of certain physical signs have significantly altered, as, methods of investigation during the past few years have shown considerable advance. How then does the book measure up in the light of these advances?

It begins with some introductory chapters describing the approach to the neurological patient, the equipment required and the techniques of taking a history and performing an examination. In general these chapters are excellent and there are few comments to make. The photograph depicting the instruments required for a neurological examination is probably unnecessary and certainly it shows its age with a very ancient looking ophthalmoscope. In the section on reflexes there is included the cremasteric reflex which most people find unhelpful and yet there is no comment on the diagnostically more valuable bulbo-cavernosus reflex. Though the latter reflex is only rarely performed it can be of considerable value in the assessment of a patient with impotence. I was also somewhat surprised to see tonic neck reflexes mentioned which in adults are excessively rare and of no diagnostic value.

There are separate chapters on the assessment of certain specialised areas of examination including the assessment of the unconscious patient, the assessment of speech, apraxia and agnosia, and a separate and important section on the autonomic nervous system. Again, in general, I found these informative and full of common sense. In the section on the unconscious patient equal emphasis is given to radioisotope scanning, electroencephalography, echoencephalography and computerised axial tomography and this in the modern era is surely somewhat unbalanced. I personally would like radioisotope scanning of the brain to be abolished completely as it usually simply confirms one's suspicion that the patient has something wrong with his brain but does not tell you what it is.

A new chapter entitled "Towards a Balan-

ced Attitude" is included and this looks at the why's and wherefore's of performing a specific investigation in a particular patient. This is a difficult area and the section in my view adopts a sensible attitude. However, I think it would have been appropriate to have a section on the investigation of old people. This is a difficult and controversial area and the investigation of subarachnoid haemorrhage, dementia and epilepsy in old people needs careful thought and surely is worthy of mention.

The final sections are concerned with investigations and these sections have been expanded to include comment regarding magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) and positron emission tomography (PET). The latter is certainly an interesting technique but most unlikely ever to provide useful clinical information for those of us in the average neurological practice. The section on neurophysiological techniques covers the standard tests available for routine use and includes a section on evoked potentials. I was surprised, however, to see no comment regarding single fibre EMG as this is now a well established technique. The appendices contain some helpful summaries of components of the neurological examination though there is an error in appendix D "The Glasgow Coma Scale".

Despite what I regard as the minor quibbles above this is an excellent book and one to be warmly recommended to those in neurological training. Like Bryan Matthews' book "Practical Neurology", it is a volume that most neurologists will wish to own and most of us, I suspect, would have been proud to write.

NEF CARTLIDGE

Surgery of the peripheral nerves. (Piccin Surgical Techniques Series—Vol. XIV). By G MORELLO and F PLUCHINO. (Pp 392; £136.00.) Published by Piccin Nuova Libreria (Italy) U.K. Distrib: Gazelle Book Services (Lancaster) 1989.

The bold type and full page colour drawings make this an immediately attractive book. It is Volume XIV of the Piccin Surgical Technique series originating from Italy. The text has been translated into English producing occasionally odd phraseology, and such variations as the use of "neurinoma" for neurilemmoma. The basic message is clear and in association with most lucid colour illustrations of the detailed structure of peripheral nerves the text clarifies the need to use accurate micro-suture of the perineurium of

individual fascicles for nerve repair rather than crude apposition of the epineurium.

The account of traumatic peripheral nerve lesions and regeneration follows the classical work of Sunderland and Seddon. There is a small section on peripheral nerve tumours but the majority of the volume is devoted to the details of micro-nerve suture and then a series of beautifully illustrated exposures of individual peripheral nerves provides a valuable reference book for the surgeon heavily involved in this type of work. It is more questionable as to whether or not the particular highly technical specialisation is part of neurosurgery or orthopaedic surgery but there is certainly a valuable place for its development by someone in any area concerned with trauma patients. For such surgeons this book is a welcome and admirable volume.

GORDON BROCKLEHURST

Topographic Brain Mapping of EEG and Evoked Potentials. Edited by K MAURER. (Pp 576; DM198.00 H/b.) Berlin: Springer, 1989.

The impetus for this book and sharing its title was an international symposium held on an unmentioned date in Wurzburg, West Germany. The volume is the ultimate in brain mapping. The author of each of the chapters is the relevant world authority on the subject. Therefore, it is definitely not merely an ego trip when they refer mainly to their own work in the reference list following their chapter: it is sheer necessity. Who else to quote but the unique expert in the field?

It is the *dernier crie* in brain cartography. However, one cannot easily avoid the feeling that the great wealth of data was obtained, rather was "caught" and described almost *statu nascendi*; and here lies the strength as well as the weakness of the book. A spirit of immediacy, enthusiasm, marvel and delight emanates from the pages, rooted no doubt in the vast unexplored fields and the potentially wonderful avenues waiting to be discovered. This spirit is comparable to that of the pioneers who had set out to build the newly discovered continent; or, closer to home, reminiscent of the spirit of Adrian, Greaves, Walter and the other pioneers of the EEG half a century ago.

Papers written by such personalities as Lehmann, Petsche, Duffy and Desmedt are truly statesmanlike, exposing theories, guidelines, interpretations, warnings and pitfalls, past and future. Bordering on philosophy these articles are gathered under the collective title "State of the Art" conveying masterfully exactly that. The methodology