ever, I particularly like the contribution by C. Coërs and N. Telerman-Toppet on fact and fancy in the histological diagnosis of denervation. There is also an excellent introductory lecture on sensory nerve action potentials and biopsy of the sural nerve in neuropathy by Fritz Buchthal and Friedrich Behse which sets an initial high standard for the volume. In a diverse volume such as this, even the specialist reader will only find small sections that are particularly relevant or even interesting. However, I would consider the contributions under each individual heading to be a reasonable representation of the work at hand in each field, with the possible exception of the neuropathy associated with alcoholism, which surprisingly is the subject of only one paper and that in the experimental animal.

This book will certainly be a worthwhile addition to the neurological department library.

J. P. BALLANTYNE

Peripheral Neurology: Case Studies in Electrodiagnosis By Jay Allen Liveson and Neil Irwin Spielholz. (Pp. 435; illustrated; \$17.95.) F. A. Davis: Philadelphia. 1979.

The authors state that this book is aimed at two groups of physicians, those involved in learning to plan, perform, and interpret electrodiagnostic studies—that is, the clinical neurophysiologist—and those who are not directly involved in the techniques, but who may have to interpret and act on the results derived therefrom—that is, the clinical neurologist. They themselves admit that it was not their intention to teach basic physiology or theory, but to instil in the reader an analytical and logical approach to electrophysiological investigation and to increase the awareness of the problems involved and the dependability of the information obtained for those who order these investigations.

The first eight pages of the book introduce the reader briefly to electrodiagnostic findings with the emphasis on interpretation of data. This is followed by 10 pages on electrophysiological abnormalities and diffuse processes such as polyneuropathies and myopathies, and a further 40 pages on localised peripheral dysfunctions, mainly mononeuropathies of various types affecting

the upper and lower limb nerves. These sections of the book are beautifully illustrated, but the text is rather lacking in detail. In spite of the authors' claim that they are not primarily interested in methodology and theory, I think an indication of the normal values for various electrophysiological parameters would have been helpful. Similarly, some comment on the types of electrodes and their influence on the measured parameters should have been included.

Three hundred and nine pages of the book are devoted to illustrative case histories, some 64 in all covering the common electrophysiological problems. Each case is presented as a short clinical problem with a question and answer section followed by a planned electrophysiological investigation. The electrodiagnostic results are presented and discussed, and conclusions reached as to the site or sites of the electrophysiological lesion with beautiful line diagrams in illustration. A basic deficiency, however, arises again from the lack of information on normal parameters from the electrophysiological investigation. All parameters are indeed stated in each case and indicated as normal or abnormal but the reader is left in the dark as to the degree of the abnormality. There is a comprehensive list of over 1000 references to the literature but the index does less than justice to the contents of the book.

This book falls between two stools. For the clinical neurophysiologist in training there is perhaps too little theory but the clinical neurologist and others who use the electrodiagnostic services will find it of value in improving their ability to interpret diagnostic reports.

J. P. BALLANTYNE

Das kleine Gelenk der Lendenwirbelsäule: Zur Kenntnis seiner funktionellen Anatomie unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der meniskoiden Einschlüsse By Arnaldo Benini. (Pp. 63; illustrated; DM 28.00.) Verlag Hans Huber: Bern 1978.

The Small Joint of the Lumbar Vertebral Column: a contribution to knowledge of its functional anatomy with particular reference to the meniscoid inclusions. This short monograph is written in German. An English summary would have given the work a much wider appeal and would probably

have been easy to construct because the text is contained in only 30 pages. However, there are in addition 20 pages of excellent illustrations which will allow any non-German reader to understand the value of the work.

Dr Benini begins with the statement that these small spinal joints have been the subject of much contradictory and inexact writing and research—especially on the nature of the meniscoid inclusions which are sometimes described as menisci (as in knee joints) or as simple synovial folds. The study relates to the present interest in the possibility that the meniscoids may cause lumbar pain by blockage of the joints. No conclusion is reached on this point but the incidence, structure, and variations of meniscoids is evaluated by the examination of 50 lumbar spines from hospital patients, aged 7 to 86 years, dying mainly from accidents, 3 stillbirths of seven and a half to eight months gestation, and from two fetuses (50 and 70 mm). Of the 500 lumbar joints opened only 35% had meniscoids. The meniscoids have a basic structure of fat, connective tissue and vessels and are continuous with extra-articular tissues through capsular gaps.

The book should be read by all concerned with the management and pathology of backache.

DAVID J. BENTLEY

Symposium on the Neurologic Aspects of Plastic Surgery Edited by Simon Fredricks and Garry S. Brody. (Pp. 328; illustrated; £34.00.) C. V. Mosby: St Louis. 1978.

For most neurologists and neurosurgeons, this will prove both a fascinating and instructive book. It deals with that rapidly growing interface between the neurological sciences and the plastic and orthopaedic surgical techniques gradually becoming available to help the disability and ameliorate the suffering of those thousands of patients with fixed neurological deficit.

Part 1 provides an excellent updated review of present ideas on the metabolism, and regeneration of peripheral nerve injuries but, for the neurologist, perhaps the most interesting contribution in this section, is that which considers the recovery of sensation after peripheral nerve repair, and the use of sensory re-education, in the treatment of such patients. It is salutary to con-