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 BEE

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-

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sider how severe a loss of function there may be in the hand, despite the virtual normality of the patient's response to the usual forms of neurological sensory testing.

Parts 2 and 3 cover the management of motor nerve and upper motor neurone injuries. The place of tendon transfer in the treatment of nerve injury, and the surgery of the hemiplegic hand will be of considerable value in helping the neurologist to decide which of his patients may benefit from surgical referral. Also in this section is an excellent review of neuromas by Dr Bruce Williams.

Part 4, which covers pressure ulcerations, is a most excellent resumé of the problems faced in this aspect of spinal injury treatment. It deals well with both the conservative and surgical treatment of pressure ulceration, and there is a chapter on the control of spasticity in the spinal injured patient. More mention might have been made in this section of the selective myelotomies now being tried in the lower cord region, to try and relieve spasticity without producing bladder problems.

The corrective surgery for facial palsy has advanced rapidly in recent years, with the development of microsurgical nerve anastomosis techniques. Many neurologists and neurosurgeons maybe unaware of this work, and the fifth section of this book, in dealing with facial palsy, will be of considerable practical value. Hans Anderl contributes an excellent chapter on cross-over grafting and presents his results in an honest fashion. Muhlbauer writes about his technique of palpebral magnets for parietic lagophthalmos, and the short chapter on free muscle grafts, although intriguing, is probably of more physiological than practical interest at present.

I consider this volume a tribute to those plastic surgeons who are extending their speciality so far beyond the limited confines of cosmetic surgery. This is a well-produced and superbly illustrated book. There is no question that it should be available for reference to all neurologists and neurosurgeons. I feel sure that for many it will introduce them to concepts of treatment for the neurologically disabled that they had not previously considered. Co-operation between neurologist and plastic surgeon is, at the

moment in its infancy. It is to be hoped that this volume will stimulate further co-operation to the ultimate benefit of the patient suffering from such common and disabling diseases.

T. A. H. HIDE

Stereotaxic Atlas of the Human Brainstem and Cerebellar Nuclei—A Variability Study Edited by F. Afshar, E. S. Watkins, and J. C. Yap. (Pp. 248; illustrated; \$188.50.) Raven Press: New York. 1978.

The volume has five sections. The first covers the technique for the atlas construction including the reference points and planes. It also deals with the materials and methods and the measurements used for the statistical analysis. The stereotaxic reference points were identified with the help of positive contrast ventriculography and teleradiography while the specimen was held in a stereotaxic frame. The measurements were made from 30 hemi-brainstems. The reference planes were the floor of the fourth ventricle, the midline of the brainstem, and a plane passing perpendicular to the floor of the fourth ventricle at the level of the fastigium.

The information on the brainstem structures is presented in the second and third parts. The second part describes the structure and its position within the brainstem and is supported by data and statistical analysis of measurements made on structures within the brainstem. There is a series of tables and charts of the mean value for each border of the structure together with the standard deviation and standard error of the means. The frequency distribution chart is shown, rostral and caudal to the fastigial plane. The coronal section and the maximum frequency distribution of the structure are also shown. This part of the atlas is reminiscent of the variability study previously of Andrew and Watkins in *A Stereotaxic Atlas of the Human Thalamus and Adjacent Structures*. Further probability data are given in the present atlas along the caudal-rostral extent of the structure. The information would be of great help to the stereotaxic surgeon in planning surgery and gives some idea regarding the shape of the structure. From this information, the third part of the volume has been constructed and consists of a stereotaxic atlas depicting the structures of the

brainstem. The outlines of the structures are based on calculations of means from the data obtained from 70% or more of the specimens. An accompanying illustrative microphotograph is also shown for each level.

The fourth and fifth parts of the volume deal with the cerebellar nuclei and show the relevant statistical analysis and the stereotaxic atlas. The authors draw attention to the change in one reference plane for this part of the atlas.

The atlas is of fundamental importance to the stereotaxic surgeon and fulfils the very important requirement of a surgeon in stereotaxic surgery. Physiological corroboration would still be required in view of the variability of the position of the structure as shown by the atlas. In the future, computerised tomography may be of help if the resolution of the system becomes capable of directly portraying target structures within the brainstem without the need for the present method of using indirect radiological reference points. The book will be a very welcome addition to the armamentarium of the stereotaxic surgeon.

JOHN W. TURNER

The Biological Basis of Schizophrenia Edited by Gywnneth Hemmings and W. A. Hemmings. (Pp. 272; illustrated; £12.95.) MTP Press: Lancaster. 1978.

The starting point of this book is defined in the preface—"for years lip service has been paid to a belief in a biological basis for schizophrenia but nevertheless psychosocial and psychodynamic 'theories' of schizophrenia have been promulgated and these have detracted from the all important biological work."

Many of the contributors present their views with a crusader's zeal, unfortunately seeing others with different views as the enemy whose efforts must be disposed of by vehement attack rather than by reasoned debate. This is sad as some of these workers have laboured long and hard in pioneering investigations into the aetiology of the schizophrenias. On the whole, I came away from the book sadder but not necessarily wiser. Several themes are dealt with. The first one, which receives most attention, is the possible link between gastrointestinal pathology and