

Book reviews

Essays in Neurochemistry and Neuropharmacology Vol 4 edited by MBH Youdim, W Lovenberg, DF Sharman and JR Lagnado (pp 282; £19.50) Chichester: John Wiley & Sons, 1980. This useful and well produced series continues with a volume in which five of the six chapters are largely on the catecholamine area—biochemical aspects of schizophrenia (ME Lewis), cyclic nucleotides and transmitter release (Weiner), the chromaffin granule and exocytosis (Zinder and Pollard), dopamine- β -hydroxylase enzymology (Rosenberg and Lovenberg), catecholamine receptor sensitivity changes (Gnegy and Costa). Neurologists will probably find most to interest them in the first and last of these chapters. Dr Lewis's review (70 pages) mainly concerns the transmethylation and dopamine hypotheses of schizophrenia. Possible syntheses of the two hypotheses are discussed. I get the impression from his article of a shift towards considering drug provoked hallucinations more seriously in relation to schizophrenia.

The one non-catecholamine chapter should also be of relevance to neurologists. This is on the neurobiology of the brain enolases (Marangos and Schmechel) and describes the localisation and properties of these enzymes in normal brain. It is pointed out that at the non-neuronal and neuronal enzymes can be used as markers of glial and neuronal cells, they provide potential tools for the investigation of neurological disorders.

G CURZON

Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis Edited by T Tsubaki and Y Toyokura (pp 426; £25.50) Japan Medical Research Foundation Publication No 8. Distributed by MTP Press Ltd, Lancaster, 1979. Another SYMP PROC, which is the abbreviation that I shall use to describe "Proceedings of a Symposium". Twenty-five chapters report the activities of a group gathered together in February, 1978, by the Japan Medical Research

Foundation. Most contributions stem from the host country, but there were eight invited guests from abroad, mainly from the USA. An introductory chapter from Forbes Norris, entitled "Old and New Clinical Problems in Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis", sets the scene. Unfortunately, there are no answers to the old problems, and the new approaches so far have proved unproductive. The rest of the volume deals with many of these abortive efforts, such as failure to identify a significant immunological abnormality, occult toxin, virus, or other cause for this unpleasant disease. Particular attention is given to anthropological aspects of motor neurone disease, with descriptions of amyotrophic lateral sclerosis in Guam, the Kii Peninsula and West New Guinea (Gajdusek). A large section also is devoted to Werdnig-Hoffman and Kugelberg-Welander diseases. The major accent throughout the book reflecting the strong pathological approach of this group of Japanese neurologists, is on morphology. This is not a book for the general neurologist, but it may be of interest to those involved in research into this disorder.

CD MARSDEN

Cognitive Components in Cerebral Event-Related Potentials and Selective Attention Edited by JE Desmedt (pp 319; DM141) Basel: S Karger, 1979. This book, volume 6 of Desmedt's valuable series, considers the late components of evoked potentials and how they may relate to cognitive states. Eighteen papers describe aspects of evoked potentials while subjects detect, discriminate, decide, ignore, act upon or make mistakes about simple stimuli presented to the three sensory systems. Although there are only four potentials considered in detail, N1, P2, P300 and CNV, there are very many cognitive states and "black boxes" abound in a review of the psychological models of selective attention. Donald spells out that the evoked potential components do not fit the black boxes and most chapters relate correlations between cognitive events and amplitude changes in the evoked potentials.

Four chapters on the clinical uses of evoked potentials show there are none,

as yet. This is disappointing but changes are described in schizophrenia, autism, depression and mental retardation as well as in organic neurological disease. It seems certain that studies along these lines have great potential for enhancing our pathophysiological understanding of these conditions in the future.

The book makes interesting reading and brings together neurophysiology and psychology. The fact that these two disciplines are not complementary adds to the interest and should stimulate further work. The editor was wise to include Ingvar's succinct account of his remarkable brain blood flow studies for, although methodologically unrelated, they are very relevant to the mind-brain relationship.

EM SEDGWICK

Neonatal Neurology By Gerald M Fenichel (pp 259; £14) Edinburgh: Churchill Livingstone, 1980.

I looked forward with enthusiasm to the appearance of this monograph on neonatal neurology by an eminent paediatric neurologist and hoped it might fill the hiatus in this field. Regrettably, I was sadly disappointed. The book is almost totally devoid of clinical photographs, with the exception of an infant with arthrogryposis (with socks on) and a few cases of gross malformations (anencephaly, encephalocoele, meningo-myelocoele). In the introductory section on normal and abnormal postures there is a series of line drawings which might have served the purpose but as any artist will know it is very difficult to reflect the age of an infant. No detail as to age is given in the captions and the infants in many of them look like 2-6 months old rather than neonates, which I think they are supposed to be representing. In the very first illustration of "normal resting posture" the infant looks very unusual to me; I have yet to see a normal newborn lying supine with both arms pointing vertically; in addition the caption says the hips are abducted but in the drawing they look adducted.

The second chapter reviews different forms of convulsions and includes a series of polygraphic recordings. This is followed by a chapter on hypotonia