

Book reviews

Cranio cerebral Computer Tomography. Volume 1 of Pathological Computer Tomography. Edited by A Wackenheim, L Jeanmart and AL Baert. (Pp 130; DM 198, US \$116.50.) Heidelberg: Springer Verlag, 1980.

This book is to form a trilogy with two others dealing with pathology of the trunk, the objective being to present cases suitable for didactic teaching in which computed tomograms and corresponding anatomical sections have been obtained. The main part of the book is, therefore, an atlas of computed tomograms, supplemented by a very brief text and few references. The computed tomograms are from second generation machines but are of reasonably good quality and they are generally accompanied by well displayed morbid anatomical sections. Many good teaching cases in which a fairly detailed comparison is possible, are included, and trainees in neurosciences should find these of value, but unfortunately the authors have included several cases, mainly among the acute conditions in which correlation is poor, usually because of too long an interval between CT and necropsy. The authors have not attempted to cover all the common CT manifestations of cerebral pathology and the approach is essentially anecdotal. The book is generally well produced, though occasionally incorrect reference is made in the text to the illustrations.

Although the concept of this book was excellent, it is obvious that an even greater amount of material was necessary to allow the type of selection essential for its unqualified success; one hopes that this will be achieved in future editions.

BRIAN KENDALL

Reaction Time and Attention after Closed Head Injury. By AH van Zomeren. (Pp 161; Dfl 30.00.) Lisse: Swets and Zeitlinger BV, 1981.

This short book is, in fact, the author's doctoral thesis presented to the University of Groningen. All too often, material presented for a thesis does not transfer easily to a conventional book, but happily that is not the case with Dr Van

Zomeren's study which is clear and concise. The book incorporates a brief but very useful historical review, and then describes the results of two main blocks of experiments. The first is concerned with the effects of task complexity and severity of injury; the second is a detailed longitudinal study of a group of patients tested serially over a 24-month period. The book is well written and informative, and while never shrinking from complex theoretical issues, it is clearly and interestingly written throughout. For anyone concerned with understanding the after-effects of closed head injury, or wanting to understand the nature of attention deficits after acute brain damage, this book will be extremely valuable.

NEIL BROOKS

Clinical Neuro-ophthalmology 2nd Ed. By Bryan Ashworth and Ian Isherwood. (Pp 292; £32.50.) Oxford: Blackwell Scientific Publications, 1981.

The second edition of this handsomely produced book is an improvement on the first. The standard of the illustrations is particularly high but the revision of the text has been less satisfactory, and it is still uneven in its approach. Some chapters, for example on the clinical examination, appear to be written for first year students; others are suitable for ophthalmologists taking the final fellowship. Random selection of a few topics in medical ophthalmology produced more errors and inconsistencies than there should be. For example there is confusion over the word "blackout" used to denote loss of consciousness and loss of vision. There is a highly inaccurate diagram of visual pathways which confuses the disc and macula. Wilson's disease appears under visual failure and there is no mention of the nasal visual field defects typical of carotid aneurysm.

The book may be useful to ophthalmologists preparing for examinations, and the bibliography is excellent, but as a source of reference and an authoritative account of neuro-ophthalmology, even of such common conditions as ischaemic optic neuritis, it compares unfavourably with its American counterpart.

ROSS RUSSELL

Notices

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