Book reviews

headaches and a new entity—prolonged benign exertion headache.

Discerning readers will note Arnold Friedman's comments that we still lack a definition of migraine, an explanation for focal neurological symptoms or unilateral headache, as well as adequately controlled epidemiological studies. Lance hints at the purpose of migraine—a daring question. Finally, a remark by Merskey, a world psychiatric authority on pain "There is no good evidence for a migraine personality". This should put an end to this old warhorse providing occupational therapy for the research registrar.

All in all a stimulating Conference and even at this price cheaper to read and digest at home compared with journeying to Florence.

JN BLAU

The Child with Disabling Illness, Principles of Rehabilitation (2nd ed) Edited by John A Downey and Niels L Low. (Pp 605; \$58.80.) New York: Raven Press, 1981.

This book covers a wide range of disabilities of a non-neurological nature. There are five sections: selected chronic medical illness, disorders of the neuromus-

cular system, disorders of the musculoskeletal system and injuries, psychosocial aspects, and dentistry. Such varied subjects and such multiple authorship makes this a difficult book to review but must first of all raise the question of its intended audience. Anyone involved in the care of the handicapped child may well benefit from reading this book although there is no guarantee that the individual will be satisfied as so much depends on particular interests.

The first section includes rheumatoid arthritis, cystic fibrosis and asthma and the reviewer is not qualified to comment on these chapters. Cerebral palsy starts the second section, but is disappointingly brief as this condition must be one of the most rewarding fields for habilitation. Also in the chapter on seizure disorders the fact that there is so much more to the treatment of epilepsy than giving drugs is not well illustrated, and some of the recommendations are open to question, such as routine lumbar puncture after the first febrile convulsion and the treatment of these seizures in most instances. Some would doubt the importance of medication in the management of learning disorders but the treatment in general, particularly of language disorders, is well discussed. Among other chapters on spinal, neuronal and myopathic diseases, the one on disorders of

muscle presents an excellent review of the subject, but should such clinical details be included in a book on rehabilitation?

Section three can stand on its own as a selected text book of orthopaedics and plastic surgery, and there is a brief section on dentistry for the handicapped. The fourth section on psychosocial aspects is of particular relevance to rehabilitation, making the point that physically handicapped children have higher rates of psychiatric disturbance compared to the general population. The book seems to make its greatest impact when the social implications of long-term illness and educational and vocation programmes are discussed, although the latter are orientated to the American scene. Also statements such as the bones of children with osteogenesis imperfecta are no longer fragile at puberty need to be qualified.

The very diversity of the conditions considered means that this book will fulfil different needs for different people, and for that reason is to be recommended to the library rather than the individual. With the inevitability of increasing specialisation it is open to question if the concept of such a book is realistic although knowledge of the accomplishments of other disciplines is no doubt desirable.

NEIL GORDON