Book reviews

the simple measures which are all feasible in any general hospital. This includes obtaining the best history of the accident, the circumstances and any changes in the patients condition before arrival at hospital, immediate and adequate first aid, accurate assessment of subsequent changes particularly the level of responsiveness now objectively measured using the Glasgow Coma Scale which is well described in this edition. The complications which demand surgery are clearly identified and the degree of urgency explicitly stated.

The section on traumatic neurosis and the post-concussional state has been rewritten and made these complicated and difficult conditions almost intelligible. There are a number of other small alterations most of which bring the text up to date in line with contemporary practice—for instance echo-encephalography is demoted and CT scanning which may be a reason for referring more patients to a special unit if progress is not satisfactory is briefly mentioned. Controversial treatments such as artificial ventilation for head injury alone (as opposed to those with both head and chest trauma) is not discussed. Small as the book is, the content, presentation and style make it worth all of the five pounds demanded for its purchase.

JOHN R BARTLETT

Neurology for the House Officer (3rd Ed). By Howard L Weiner and Lawrence P Levitt. (Pp 204; £6.75.) Baltimore: Williams & Wilkins, 1983.

The authors describe this as a "problem oriented" guide which gives advice about common neurological upsets encountered by house officers in training. It is written for American students, interns and residents. The contents are a mixture with chapters based on signs such as "right and left hemiplegia, and hyperreflexia and hyporeflexia" and those based on more conventional symptoms such as "stroke, headache, dementia, seizures". There are useful chapters on the "neurology of alcoholism, and of diabetes," and "malignancy and the nervous system". Many helpful comments appear which may aid recognition of important symptoms and signs and there is also practical advice on the management of certain disorders.

The soft cover and small size enable it to be kept in the pocket although the print which looks like typescript is disappointing. In the assessment of coma there is no mention of the gag or cough reflexes. There is

no emphasis on potential life-threatening neurological emergencies with bulbar or respiratory failure as in myasthenia gravis or tetanus. There are also some irritating points. Phenobarbitone is not the first drug to be used in children with epileptic seizures. The page numbers of the index show errors, for example medial longitudinal fasciculus, myasthenia gravis.

Overall I am sure it will continue to be popular for its intended American audience, and the presence of a third edition supports this. I suspect the demand in this country will not be great.

T FOWLER

Neurologic Emergencies in Infancy and Childhood. Edited by John M Pellock & Edwin C Myer. (Pp 418; £30.00.) London: Harper & Row Ltd, 1984.

This multi-author book covers the major fields of acute neurology and fills a much needed gap. It contains particularly good chapters on increased intracranial pressure by Professor Miller and by Nicol and Ward (and Mickell and Ward), and a very useful discussion of the diagnosis and management of coma in childhood. In addition new born problems, trauma, acute encephalopathies, poisoning, epilepsy, vascular disease, infections and neuromuscular and neuro-ophthalmological disorders are dealt with. This book is certainly to be recommended as providing a very useful starting point for the management of acute neurological disorders and very well selected references.

It is important that the correct preparation of isosorbide used in the management of raised intracranial pressure is given.

It is very much a book written from a neurologist's point of view and fails to recognise that a lot of acute neurological disorders occur in children with major cardiac, renal or other metabolic disease, very often in the postoperative period. This imposes specific problems of both investigation and treatment which deserve full discussion.

There is a tendency to cover the field generally and to limit discussion on the problems which are really difficult. This is particularly apparent when the place and timing of invasive investigation and treatment of focal encephalitis is being considered. I wonder if they could not assume a general understanding of the management of many problems which are common paediatric ones and focus on the areas which require discussion, like, for example,

the place of biopsy in the diagnosis of herpes simplex encephalitis.

The book could be shortened considerably by all authors, recognising a common line of management for coma, raised intracranial pressure and epilepsy and merely referring to that and adding specifics relevant to the particular cause of the problem. I think also the specific investigatory chapters at the end could have been included as part of the major text.

Although there is a chapter on ophthalmological emergencies the methods of testing vision in young children are not delineated and assessment of vision, in for example, children with shunt failure is not mentioned. The relief from this somewhat pure neurological line is given by John Freeman, in a chapter on myelodysplasia which recognises that emergencies can sometimes occur in previously handicapped children which may modify both assessment and therapy. A short discussion of acute presentations of genetically determined progressive disease would be useful and of the specific acute neurological problems that occur in association with congenital heart disease. If space was saved, it might also be nice to include a short chapter on the acute psychiatric presentations on organic brain disease and on the full range of acute hysterical disorders.

This book certainly deserves success and to go into further editions, and could, with modification become one of the most useful text books of paediatrics available.

BGR NEVILLE

Eating and Its Disorders (Association for Research in Nervous and Mental Disease, Volume 62). Edited by Albert J Stunkard and Eliot Stellar. (Pp 302; \$56.00.) New York: Raven Press, 1983.

This book contains a series of reviews on the control of eating behaviour and body weight, as well as a section on the treatment of eating disorders. The first third of the book is devoted to basic physiology: central nervous mechanisms, neurotransmitters and gut hormones, and the pharmacology of eating and hunger. The second third of the book deals with various theories on the regulation of body weight and their relevance in the genesis of obesity. The last section is concerned with clinical aspects of obesity, anorexia nervosa and bulimia, with an emphasis on their treatment.

The editors have brought together a team of experts, mainly from the United

States, but including two British authors. Their names will be familiar to most readers, as physiologists, psychologists and clinicians who have made major contributions to their subject. They write with authority and provide welcome guidance in a difficult subject.

A reassuring feature is the re-emergence of older ideas which still have considerable validity, even if they have to be refined as a result of experimental research over the last two decades. For example, it is comforting to read that the hypothalamic theory of hunger and satiety has stood the test of time. Thus it is confirmed that lesions of the ventro-medial "satiety centres" cause overeating and obesity, but the influence of these regions on hunger and satiety is more complex than originally supposed. Lateral hypothalamic lesions produce a number of non-specific effects, but there are also specific and severe effects on the regulation of food intake.

There is also a return to "set-point" theory of the regulation of body weight, meaning that physiological mechanisms operate so as to defend a given body weight. Various mechanisms may alter this set-point. They range from "hedonic activity" (eating for pleasure) which raises the set-point, to lateral hypothalamic lesions in animals and gastric surgery in obese patients which lower the set-point.

The quality of the reviews is generally high and several of them are very comprehensive. The chapter on neurotransmitters in the control of feeding goes a long way towards reconciling apparently contradictory experimental findings. The reviewer on the pharmacology of eating and hunger shows that drug effects are not always simple to predict: they can be modulated by conditions such as body weight, state of arousal, and the palatability and nutrient content of the diet. Another chapter is devoted to the role of gut hormones in postprandial satiety. It is proposed that the luminal surface of the gut is a great sensory sheet extending from the mouth to the end of the small intestine and that it is sensitive to the chemical and physical stimuli of food.

There is also much of interest in the chapters on clinical aspects. Treatment is discussed more from the point of view of its appraisal than that of practical measures. An exception is the chapter on the treatment of bulimic patients, for whom a programme of cognitive behaviour therapy is described in detail. The senior editor deserves a special commendation for writing an introduction in which he integrates

succinctly the contributions of the members of his team.

The book is well produced and well written. It is rather expensive but still worth obtaining for the up-to-date and coherent account of this complex subject. It is particularly recommended for clinicians who need guidance in understanding the brain mechanisms underlying eating behaviour and wish to consider theoretical models for the eating disorders they may be called upon to treat.

GERALD RUSSELL

EEG and Evoked Potentials in Psychiatry and Behavioral Neurology. Edited by John R Hughes and William P Wilson. (Pp 411; £29.95.) Sevenoaks: The Butterworth Group, 1983.

The intended audience for this book, as stated in the preface, includes neurologists, psychiatrists and electroencephalographers, who are concerned with the organic bases of behaviour and mental disorders. Such an audience certainly implies a very wide range of interests and skills, thus confronting the authors with a difficult task as to the scope and boundaries of their contributions and, at the same time, providing an indication to the readers of what to expect from the book. The writers have generally found a good outcome to this problem by producing comprehensive, yet concise reviews of the literature on electrophysiological correlates of the clinical entities dealt with, some including summaries of psychopathological syndromes and definitions used.

The book consists of 16 chapters containing topics of interest to the every-day clinical work of psychiatric units, such as EEG and evoked potentials in organic psychiatric conditions, affective disorders and schizophrenia, alcoholism, mental disabilities in childhood; the effects produced by psychotropic drugs and ECT upon neurophysiological tests are also covered. Three chapters deal with unusual EEG patterns and their relation to psychiatric symptomatology. The final chapter is on the interesting and highly controversial topic of the use of the EEG in medicolegal issues. The lists of references at the end of each chapter are adequate and fairly comprehensive; in the opinion of the reviewer there are names missing that she feels should have been included, for example—HF Muller in EEG in senile dementia, JC Shaw and S Butler in the subject of interhemispheric EEG asynchrony,

Ruth F Harris in the various aspects of the EEG in children.

Chapters dealing with the EEG in various psychiatric disorders give a fair account of the state of affairs in the clinical field. I would like to mention those by JG Small on schizophrenia and affective disorders and T Kelly and EL Reilly on the effects of alcohol and alcoholism on the EEG, which are succinct and made interesting. In the chapter on EEG and EC-therapy, RD Weiner raises promising points in relation to the potential value of the test as a monitor during the period of treatment. The chapters on sleep EEG changes in psychiatric patients by V Kupfer and F Reynolds, and CNV and other slow potentials in adult psychiatry by C Shagass give, as expected, a good amount of valuable information; it is unfortunate that these chapters suffer from rather limited illustrations and technical data. The scarcity of technical methodological information and illustrations is general in the book; this presumably, it was the policy chosen, which the reviewer deplores. One exception are the chapters written by Mary A Andriola, particularly EEG in mental retardation which contain excellent EEG samples. The lack of illustrations is strongly felt in the chapters dealing with intriguing EEG patterns (positive spikes, 6/s spikes, SSS). These EEG items are still a matter of controversy, as JR Hughes makes clear in the text, and this controversy not only concerns their clinical implications, but also the technical measurement of them and their electrophysiological descriptive qualities, hence the importance of illustrating samples.

The volume is well bound and includes a fairly good index, a valuable item, unusual in multi-authored books.

In spite of the limitations noted, I would recommend this book to workers engaged or interested in neuropsychiatry, in particular those who use the electrophysiological tests in their daily clinical work, directly or through clinical neurophysiological departments. They will find helpful, thorough reviews of the literature and also some personal accounts on the theme in this book.

RUTH OBRECHT

Dementia. A Clinical Approach. By Jeffrey L Cummings and D Frank Benson. (Pp 416; £40.00.) Sevenoaks: The Butterworth Group, 1983.

Cummings and Benson have produced a