Book reviews

on spinal extra-dural metastases and their management. This collection suffers from lack of direction in terms of subject matter; there is no editorial selection of good from poor and little in the way of organisation of the papers into subject matter. Any discussion that did take place is not published. Almost 80% of the reports contain information already available in literature and many of them contribute no more than that which is obtained in any undergraduate textbook of neurology, pathology or oncology. Some authors have not contributed anything original, merely reviewed some papers. The case for chemotherapy, radiotherapy, indications and methods of spinal column fixation are all poorly presented and to the uninitiated provide a very one-sided view of the management of the condition, for example spinal column fixation using Meurig-Williams clamps would not be accepted in many spinal surgical centres as an adequate means of vertebral columns immobilisation. One paper on chemohormonal therapy for breast cancer metastases in 13 patients reported 12 months' remission in comparison to 7 months using a different therapeutic regimen. Studies like this get oncology a bad name.

Attached to the end of the series on intracranial metastases are various reports from other German workers on experimental studies and cerebral blood volume, control of intercranial pressure, the effects of profound hypotension on cerebral pressure, the effects of profound hypotension on cerebral energy metabolism and studies in pituitary hypothalamic axis.

Reviewed as a report of the annual German meeting, this collage will be of interest to the members who attended the meeting. As a contribution to the understanding of the condition, it cannot be recommended.

ALAN CROCKARD

Craniosynostosis Edited by Guido Galli. (Pp 280: \$132. Prepub.) Florida: CRC Press Inc, 1983.

During the last two years, four books devoted to this subject have landed on my desk. For such a subject this constitutes a spate. Craniosynostosis has interested many neurosurgeons, especially in the paediatric field, for a long time. Publication of these books seems more likely to reflect the accumulation of experience and hence a more authoritative approach rather than a sudden revival of interest. This volume is

unique, however, in having as its editor a nuclear medicine physician. The reasons for this are well explained in the introduction but make me wonder whether this precedent is a warning for the things to come in neurosurgery.

An encyclopaedic approach is attempted and to a large extent succeeds. Thus radiology of the skull is described extensively with numerous diagrams and radiographs. Pathology, classification, diagnosis and bone scanning all have chapters of their own bringing together a wealth of information previously widely scattered in journals. Very little, however, of the information will influence the practical neurosurgeon's management. For example, no fewer than 58 syndromes are described in which craniosynostosis plays a part together with over a dozen further conditions associated with craniosynostosis. It is remarkable that the editor and his team have managed without a geneticist among them.

The longest chapter, understandably, is the one on surgical management of craniosynostosis. Summaries of the larger published series are aided by a further selection of excellent photographs. The tyro by this time, however, will be satiated with information particularly when he is provided with a wide variety of operations from which to choose. Fortunately, for each variety of the condition a section called *Authors' Experience* describes what is actually done in Rome—that is, at the Catholic University.

After this book little more is needed except for paediatric neurosurgeons to publish their methods and results, but only after their experience has become sufficiently great.

KENNETH TILL

Cerebrospinal Fluid Pulse Pressure and Craniospinal Dynamics. A Theoretical, Clinical and Experimental Study. By Cees JJ Avezaat and John HM Van Eijndhoven. (Pp 339; Dfl 90.00.) The Hague: A Jongbloed en Zoon, 1984.

This is written as a combined thesis by two Dutch scientists one of whom is a neurosurgeon and the other an engineer. The volume-pressure relationship (VPR) and cerebrospinal fluid pulse pressure (CSFPP) are difficult subjects to make interesting. While the book has not been written for a wide commercial audience its clear and well presented arguments together with plenty of diagrams and

graphical displays more than compensate for this.

The authors' ideas are introduced against a background review of the relevant literature and as is the case with work involving VPR and CSFPP there are many mathematical equations and derivations used to express the hypotheses. The benefits of co-ordinating this work between an engineer and a surgeon are obvious here, but without an understanding of the mathematics involved these have to be accepted at face value. Two notable points here are the inclusion of a constant term into the experimental description of the VPR and quantification of the change in cerebral blood volume at each heart beat.

The middle chapters describe well conceived and original experimental work generally based on the relationship between the VPR and CSFPP under different pathophysiological circumstances including brain compression, hypercapnia, hypotension and hypertension. Chapter 8 tidily concludes the first part of the book with a general discussion that always tries to retain clinical relevance within its perspective.

The last two chapters are concerned with CSF dynamics and consist of a detailed mathematical derivation of the authors' theoretical model followed by animal experiments which verify it. Chapter 9 is the most difficult chapter in the book as it is comprised almost solely of mathematical equations. I felt this whole section represented a change in direction away from the main theme of VPR and CSFPP although, as the authors point out, CSF absorption and formation are related to pressure volume dynamics.

This is work of high quality and is an important contribution to the study of pressure-volume dynamics. Clear scientific argument and good presentation make its reading a rewarding experience. Criticism about methods and results may come from other workers in the field, but that is only to be expected. This book should be read by all neurosurgeons involved in ICP research.

RA JOHNSTON

Introduction to Clinical Neuroscience. By Sir John Walton. (Pp 246; £8.75.) Eastbourne: Bailliere Tindall, 1983.

I became slightly bewildered when I started to read the first chapter of this book. The account of the fundamental unit of nervous activity, the excitation and propagation of neuronal action potentials, was not quite

correct. Certainly the sodium pump and myelin thickness are related to these, but not quite so directly as implied. I then realised that I had been misled by the title of the book to expect a discussion on the basic sciences relevant to clinical neurology. In fact there is little physiology and less anatomy. A future edition could profitably expand the brief statement on neuronal migration. The strength of the book is in its concise accounts of neuropathological mechanisms and the disturbances of function due to specified lesions of the human nervous system. As an account of disordered function made apparent through clinical signs and symptoms, it is superb and I have not read a better. Sir John has a gift for extracting the essence of a clinical problem and at the same time adding the illuminating observation of an experienced clinician. The proposed pathophysiological mechanisms are generally accepted. One might have added to the descriptions of causalgia and paraesthesias some description of the probable mechanisms. Some discussions on the possible causes of syringomyelia would be appropriate and the account of motor control has a somewhat old-fashioned air. Defects are not enough to raise the intercranial (sic) pressure listed in the index. This is a book to be recommended for those who already have a little knowledge of neurobiology and the clinical signs of neurological disease. If I was recommending a reading list for a self-tutored neurology registrar I would start with Gordon Holmes' "Introduction" and Draper's "Lecture Notes", follow with this book, and go on to Victor and Adams' "Principles". After that he should be ready for the major Walton opera. For the appropriate stage of training this new book, derived from the Neurology section of a volume on Pathophysiology of International Textbook of Medicine is perfectly judged (and remarkably cheap).

JA SIMPSON

Neurosurgical Management for the House Officer. By Allan H Friedman and Robert H Wilkins. (Pp 169; £6.75.) London: Williams & Wilkins, 1984.

The 165 pages of this pocket sized book are packed with information which is pertinent, contemporary, suitably referenced and usefully tabulated. It is difficult to take issue with the substance of any of the 15 chapters. Indeed, a house officer thus equipped would be a most effective and thoroughly competent practitioner. That

said, this reviewer is in some doubt whether the manner in which this information is presented and displayed is conducive to its learning.

The text is printed in an unarresting type face; and the format is rigorously subsectioned and tediously repetitive. Also, the prose is dry and borders on the telegraphic. In short, it is not easy to digest. These detractions are compounded by illustrations that sometimes are carelessly drawn, frequently use lettering no more than 1.5 mm in size and occasionally are, in parts, frankly illegible. If the reasons for this utilitarian production are cost, this could be false economy. The market is there, but it may not be captured by such an unstimulating—though scientifically sound—product.

RF GLEDHILL

Monographs in Ophthalmology Series. The Visual System in Myelin Disorders. Edited by A Neetens, A Lowenthal, JJ Martin. (Pp 518; £57.25.) The Hague: Dr. W. Junk BV, 1984.

There are 61 papers in this book from 54 authors distinguished in their own field. The editors intended each contribution to give a "state of the art" so as to provide "clear information to both the ophthalmologist and the neurologist to stimulate mutual interest and to lead to inter-related contributions". Although many authors have attempted to cover the whole spectrum of myelin disorders inevitably the majority of material deals with multiple sclerosis. The editors' overall view of the subject has an interesting historical introduction including the clinical details of the first reported case of multiple sclerosis in the autobiography of Augustus d'Este who was grandson of George III, and complained of blurred vision, double vision, numbness, weak legs, and sphincter disturbance. The remainder of this introduction which is the single, largest contribution to the book, reviews other aspects of recent advances in the field which are subsequently covered in more detail by other authors.

The book is divided into four main sections, myelin and physiological myelination, general physio-pathology of myelin disorders, human and animal myelin disorders, and treatment and prevention of disorders of myelin. The quality of papers is variable and in general the clinical papers provide the most useful subject review.

In the basic science sections the material

is often inappropriate to the knowledge of general interests of neurologists or ophthalmologists. For example, one and a half pages and two references on enzymology, metabolism and turnover of myelin is too succinct to provide a useful introduction to this field. The most useful sections include those on the value of contrast sensitivity studies and visual psychophysical tests in demyelinating disease although it is unfortunate that contrast sensitivity function has been abbreviated CSF. There are useful contributions on chiasmal and post-chiasmal involvement, nystagmus and multiple sclerosis, imaging techniques, and technical aspects of the recording of eye movements and extra-ocular muscle EMG.

In general this book tries to cover too wide a field. The basic science sections do not consistently provide information at the level appropriate to clinical neurologists and ophthalmologists. This is disappointing as this juxtaposition of basic and clinical science has been very successful in other recently published neuro-ophthalmology text books. The clinical sections would undoubtedly be of value to neurologists, many being comprehensive and well referenced.

CJK ELLIS

Jelliffe: American Psychoanalyst and Physician. By John C Burnham and His Correspondence with Sigmund Freud and C.G. Jung. Edited by William McGuire. (Pp 324; £17.00.) London: University of Chicago Press, 1983.

Anyone researching into the history of neuropsychiatry will know of Smith Elly Jelliffe (1866-1945) and of the strange combination of neurology and homespun psychoanalysis contained in his writings.

The first section of Professor Burnham's book attempts to explain this admixture. Jelliffe comes across as a selfmade polymath, of the American variety, who administered well his erudition. He is charitably described as a "broker" or "mediator" of ideas and the point is made that he was not an original or creative scientist. This is certainly the unconvincing figure he cuts to those on this side of the Atlantic. It would be nearer the mark to say that he was a hard working medical journalist, something of a polyglot who assiduously courted his European connections. His erudition, patchy as it was, plugged a glaring gap in the parochial medical environment of his period and contributed in no small measure to his success.