

“used” rather than kept on a shelf for reference. With this in mind, I found the Appendix at the end of the book to be the most valuable part. Here, the clinical observations and tests useful in distinguishing between organic and hysterical lesions are listed and we are told how to evaluate loss of sensation, power, vision, hearing etc, something which is often neglected in psychiatric books on the subject.

The middle chapters are devoted to expanding on these observations, but the style is often rambling and repetitive and the busy clinician will be tempted to go directly to the Appendix.

Other chapters deal briefly with the historical background, definition of terms and management but those interested in these aspects, rather than in the neurological diagnosis, would be well advised to consult other textbooks.

MARIA RON

Epilepsy: an Update on Research and Therapy (Progress in Clinical and Biological Research Vol 124). Edited by Giuseppe Nistico, Raoul Di Perri and H Meinardi. (Pp 396; £58.00.) New York: Alan R Liss Inc., 1983.

This volume comprises the proceedings of an “Advanced Course in Epilepsy” held in Copanello in 1982. The book is divided into two sections, the first on basic mechanisms in epilepsy and the second on clinical and social aspects. A wide range of subjects is considered from the molecular mechanisms in the anticonvulsant action of benzodiazepines, to medical education and epilepsy. The majority of the articles are by Italian authors with a small number of other papers by European and American contributors. As might be expected, the resulting *mélange* is of uneven quality; with, for example, excellent reviews by Chapman and Meldrum on the effects of anticonvulsant drugs on brain amino acid metabolism, and by Perucca and Crema on therapeutic drug monitoring, but with disappointing contributions on epidemiology, cerebral blood flow and EEG. As the conference was an “advanced course on epilepsy”, most papers are review articles, and little new research is presented. Whether such a volume in this format serves a real need is doubtful. The book is nevertheless well produced and well edited, but the cost of £58 is surely unjustifiable.

SIMON SHORVON

Clinical Neurology. The Resident’s Guide. Edited by Alexandre B Todorov. (Pp 358; DM98.00.) Stuttgart: Georg Thieme Verlag Stuttgart, 1983.

This book contains a lot of information about common neurological disorders. It is intended for residents in the USA, and would be appropriate for young qualified doctors in the UK who are intending to take the MRCP examination.

There are 16 chapters, each devoted to a group of neurological disorders. Common conditions are comprehensively covered. Each chapter is written by a different author. Apart from a pre-test and post-test section at the beginning and end of the book, there are five self-assessment sections occurring between every 3rd and 4th chapter of text.

Though quite satisfactory, this book does not seem to be superior to textbooks which are already available to young doctors by virtue of extra clarity, particular choice of subject matter, or attractiveness of layout and price.

IMS WILKINSON

Advances in Epileptology: the XIIIth Epilepsy International Symposium. Edited by Haruo Akimoto, Hajime Kazamatsuri, Masakazu Seino, Arthur A Ward Jr. (Pp 750; \$97.34.) New York: Raven Press, 1982.

The Thirteenth Epilepsy International Symposium was held in Japan in 1981. This volume contains 109 reports from 2–8 pages long, selected from the much larger number of invited and volunteer papers presented at the meeting. As is usual in this series the contributions have been skilfully selected and well edited.

The papers are grouped under thirteen main headings. These provide convenient rapid surveys of activity in particular areas, notably in classification, new diagnostic techniques and epilepsy and behaviour. In many contributions leading figures briefly summarising their favourite theme. Novelty is provided by a generous sprinkling of Japanese offerings.

This volume does not provide considered comprehensive reviews, nor can the student turn to particular sections to answer a practical question. Thus the eleven chapters on Antiepileptic Drugs: Pharmacology and Treatment of Epilepsy provide little indication of the latest views on the subject.

The volumes in this series appear

approximately one year after each meeting. They provide an excellent digest of the main contributions. Reading the book is a cheaper, quicker and less strenuous method of surveying recent progress than attending the meeting. Indeed the volume costs only half the current Registration Fee. Having the choice is valuable, making the choice depends on personal preferences—for travel, for exchanging gossip in hotel bars—or for sitting comfortably with a beautifully produced volume.

BS MELDRUM

Trauma Care. Edited by William Odling-Smee, Alan Crookard. (Pp 657; £24.20.) London, Academic Press Inc., 1981.

This is an unusual book, ambitiously conceived and produced in a particularly pleasing style. It covers the whole range of trauma, but its 650 pages are on thin enough paper to make the book manageable to handle. It is essentially a Belfast book, with one contribution each from Ohio, Oxford, Leeds and Glasgow. The first quarter of the book deals with “Principles of Trauma”, including epidemiology, physiopathology, radiology, care and rehabilitation. Specific injuries dealt with include upper and lower limbs, vascular, thoracic, abdominal, genito-urinary, eyes and ears, and maxillofacial and the nervous system.

The last of these includes separate chapters on head injury, spinal and peripheral nerve injury, by one of the editors. These give good accounts for the many kinds of specialist who inevitably become involved in the management of central nervous system injury—whether they want to or not. There are numerous line diagrams and a few radiographs in most chapters, and every chapter begins with a classical quotation and with a clearly set out list under the label “Action”. These are set out in chronological order, on a time scale that varies with the type of injury under discussion. In head injury this is first minute, hour, day, week, month. Each chapter ends with suggestions for further reading.

This promises to be a most useful book for the growing group of A/E consultants, their trainees and staff. Those in other specialties could with profit turn to this book for a clear and brief account of injuries affecting systems other than that to which they themselves are trained. Naturally, they will look to more detailed accounts for their own subjects, where they need to read in more depth.

B JENNETT