

folate deficiency to anticonvulsant-induced haematological disorders. The section on connective tissue abnormalities deals exhaustively with Dupuytren's contracture, plantar fibromas, and frozen shoulders. The section on motor and cerebellar disorders is by contrast disappointingly brief dealing with dyskinesias, and cerebellar disorders and atrophy, but making no mention of the important subject of the adverse effects of anticonvulsant drugs on cognitive function and behaviour. The book finishes with a brief exhortation and instruction on how to avoid chronic toxicity.

The book certainly has all the shortcomings of a symposium publication and a considerable portion of the book is taken up by articles, the substance of which may be available elsewhere or which would not have passed the scrutiny of a reputable journal. The book lacks balance and the selection of topics seems arbitrary. A far more balanced outline of the chronic toxicity of anticonvulsants is provided by Dr Schmidt's scholarly book produced only a year earlier by the same publishers. Whilst some of the general review chapters would be useful to clinicians who treat epilepsy, one is genuinely left wondering who will buy this book. One suspects that one may only see it on the shelves of those symposium participants receiving a free copy, and libraries who feel obliged to keep up a comprehensive collection!

DW CHADWICK

Integrated Clinical Science: Psychiatry. Edited by JL Gibbons. (Pp 156; £7.50) London: William Heinemann Ltd, 1983.

Here is a new addition to an expanding series ("Integrated Clinical Science") of short books published by Heinemann for medical students. This volume on psychiatry covers the major topics in the undergraduate curriculum. There are chapters on classification, assessment, the main psychiatric disorders, alcohol and drug abuse, suicide and deliberate self-harm, psychosexual disorders, psychosomatic medicine, methods of treatment and forensic psychiatry (including an up to the minute account of the new Mental Health Act, 1983). The psychiatry of old age is, quite rightly, given a chapter to itself but I was disappointed to see that there are no sections, however brief, on child psychiatry or mental handicap. This is a multi-author text book and although there is substantial uniformity of style and content, some differences of opinion remain. It was interest-

ing to read, for example, that alcohol is listed as a cause of dementia in one chapter but denied as such in another.

In general, however, this is a thoughtfully produced book which I can certainly commend as providing for the average student a very readable account of clinical adult psychiatry. The layout and style are effective. I particularly liked the use in some chapters of sample case histories to illustrate clinical points. The balance between sections was clearly designed for an undergraduate readership. There is at least as much emphasis on those problems likely to confront the student in a later medical career, such as the parasuicide or the interaction between physical and psychological aspects of illness, as on more traditional psychiatric disorders such as schizophrenia. A series of questions designed to elicit suicidal ideation acts as an especially relevant illustration of interviewing techniques. Keen students, who may require more than this book can provide, will be helped by a brief list of key references for each subject covered. For its price this is likely to become a popular introduction to the field.

STUART TURNER

Clinical and Biological Aspects of Peripheral Nerve Diseases. *Neurology and Neurobiology, Vol 4.* Edited by Leontino Battistin, George A Hashim, Abel Lajtha. (Pp 402; £37.00.) New York: Alan R Liss Inc, 1983.

This symposium at the University of Padova must have been great fun for its distinguished participants. The meeting honoured the tercentenary of Morgagni's birth and opened with an interesting account of his contribution to medical science which has almost been translated from Italian into English. His biographers claim for him the distinction of describing such varied entities as Adams-Stokes attacks and Laennec's cirrhosis and of demolishing Descartes' concept of the pineal as the seat of the soul. The symposium clearly provided a valuable meeting ground for laboratory and bedside scientists which Morgagni would have liked. Unfortunately the contributions often have the flavour of lecture notes and their content has usually already been published in peer-reviewed journals or books. There are some interesting more rounded essays such as those on epidemiology by Schoenberg and on the problems of localising and classifying the sites of axonal/neuronal dis-

ease by Rowland. There are also helpful new contributions. Brostoff and White have demonstrated the absence of P₂ from chicken myelin, which is relevant to the mechanism of Guillain-Barré syndrome following swine influenza vaccination. Madrid contributed a beautifully illustrated paper on chronic experimental allergic neuritis in the guinea-pig illustrating for the first time widening of the outer myelin lamellae in that condition. Even these, however, will presumably be submitted to and accepted by a peer-reviewed journal. Internal evidence suggests that several contributors did not submit manuscripts. I think Morgagni would have preferred that all contributions had been privately circulated among the participants and not published.

RAC HUGHES

Oxford Textbook of Psychiatry. By Michael Gelder, Dennis Gath and Richard Mayou. (Pp 883; Cloth £35.00 Paper £20.00.) Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983.

This book is written by three psychiatrists in Oxford, the Professor of Psychiatry there and his two Readers. It is in my view a very good book and manages to cover the whole field of psychiatry at a level which is just right for psychiatrists in training. I think that it could also be recommended to neurologists because some of the topics that are covered are also written about without jargon and at the right level. Schizophrenia, which is a subject that I know most about, can be taken as a good example of this. The development of the concept, the current diagnostic criteria, the knowledge about its cause and the treatment, are all dealt with sensibly and with considerable skill.

Many of the textbooks of psychiatry are unsuitable for neurologists or neurosurgeons in training because they either cover some areas in too meagre a fashion or have too strong a theoretical bias. This book avoids these problems and I can thoroughly recommend it to readers of the Journal.

JC CUTTING