Hippocrates ("those who suffer from frequent and severe fainting without obvious cause die suddenly") and Harvey and Gowers.

The second section of the book entitled "Effects of the cardiovascular system on the nervous system" is more difficult to classify. The authors review the physiology of cerebral blood flow; their chapter on the basis of strokes is particularly helpful. The range covered includes spinal cord vascular disease, migraine and various disorders of the collagen and inflammatory group. The book ends with a note on multiple sclerosis for which there is some evidence for a breakdown in the blood brain barrier but any link between a possible vascular aetiology and the controversial current use of hyperbaric oxygen must be regarded as doubly speculative. However, by approaching these neurological disorders from, as it were, a tangential direction, some refreshing and original ideas about aetiology are examined.

Those with special interests may find less in particular areas than they need but to have covered so much is a mark of critical selection which has succeeded and both sections of the book are excellent in their different ways. Those engaged in research will find it necessary for current assessment of clinical autonomic function and cardiologists, general physicians and neurologists will all find much of interest and instruction within its well designed and readable pages.

R BANNISTER

Cranioplasty Indications, Techniques and Results. By Dragoslav Stula. (Pp 112; \$29.50.) Vienna: Springer-Verlag, 1984.

I wish I could find this book more useful than it is. For a start, it is of a good size, being just over 100 pages of text and illustrations with all the advantages of a single author being given more space than would be allowed him in a journal (except as a supplement) to expand upon a subject that might otherwise tend to be taken for granted and yet is one in which he has taken a particular interest. There are also some unexpected pleasures to be derived from the quality of the translation (presumably from German) and the proof-reading (presumably in German). A phrase like "a cranial bone plastic is performed" may not be intentional, but what about "where the bone is splattered or dirty"? What a splendid neologism splattered is. I hope it escapes the proof-readers of this review.

Unfortunately, the disadvantages predominate. Dr Stula has 217 patients to describe and some interesting histories to relate, but the information is never presented really well enough for us to learn from such an experience. He tells us that large bone defects of the skull vault produce cosmetic disabilities of such severity that filling them in is a good thing. There are ample pictures to demonstrate this and I doubt whether there would be any serious disagreement. However, the interesting questions relate to the alterations in the dynamics of cranial pressure and their effects upon cerebral function. Dr Stula's CT scan illustrates the enormous shift of the ventricular system that may occur away from the side of the defect and he records cases where extradural monitoring of intracranial pressure has revealed grossly raised pressures which fell to normal as soon as a cranioplasty had been performed. This is tantalising stuff but closer inspection reveals that such an abnormality was discovered in only four out of a total of 12 patients who were studied in this fashion and further on there is a rather contradictory remark about all the patients with large skull defects who came to surgery for cranioplasty with lumbar drains inserted for pressure recording, in fact, having low pressures. It is problems like these which detract from the value of this volume. Those who favour titanium for their reconstructions will find no mention of it here but there is an interesting description of the storage of bone flaps within the anterior abdominal wall (6 cases) until they are needed. This might well prove useful in a third world situation although I doubt if it is often required nowadays in Basel.

There are few references outside the German literature and with the pound and the dollar approaching parity I suspect that many neurosurgeons will wish to preserve their \$29.50 for more rewarding purchases.

RD HAYWARD

Communication in Parkinson's Disease. By Sheila Scott, FI Caird and BO Williams. (Pp 113; £7.95.) Beckenham: Croom Helm Ltd, 1984.

Inability to communicate is one of the greatest burdens of patients with Parkinson's disease. Modern drug therapy can help Parkinsonian speech but, unfortunately, many patients still are left with difficulty in producing intelligible language. A recent survey of patients revealed that almost 50% reported significant speech

disturbance (Oxtoby, M 1982, Parkinson's Disease Patients and their Social Needs, Parkinson's Disease Society, London). Any other means of helping such individuals would be of inestimable value.

This small volume reviews what is known of the problems of speech and communication in Parkinson's disease. One of its values is to bring together the literature available in neurological, geriatric and speech communication journals. This should make it an invaluable starting reference work for anyone preparing to tackle the problem. The authors themselves have set about evaluating how to assess Parkinsonian speech and the many methods that speech therapists have tried to help. Their studies on the use of proprioceptive neuromuscular facilitation and prosodic exercise therapy have led them to suggest a rational and cost effective method of delivering domiciliary speech therapy. What now is needed urgently is replication of their results which, if achieved, should lead to greater use of speech therapy in Parkinson's disease.

CD MARSDEN

Neuro-Otology and Skull Base Surgery. Advances in Oto-Rhino-Laryngology Series Vol 34. Edited by P van den Broek, C Cremers, G Hoogland, J Mann. (Pp 286; \$98.25.) Basel: Karger 1984.

This records the proceedings of an international workshop on its title subjects, held in the Netherlands towards the end of 1983. Provided that it is considered as a bound collection of nearly 25 papers, on this topic, it will be of interest to anyone working in this field. There is no way in which this should be looked at as a text book on the subject, nor do I believe its distinguished editors wish to present it in that light. All but the last few papers are concerned with cerebello-pontine angle tumours, so that the representation of other skull base surgery is relatively small.

What is however achieved by presenting the products of this symposium is a series of individual papers which cover every "up to date" aspect of the anatomy, the diagnosis, and the treatment of cerebello-pontine angle tumours, and particularly acoustic neurinomas. 18 papers, each by separate authors cover these topics. Three more are devoted to facial nerve problems; one to a new and original method for section of the vestibular nerve in Meniere's disease; and two to skull base surgery proper. The papers are interspersed with