

with a brief bibliography. The scientists have encapsulated the current views on their subjects for the clinician, and while clarity varies, they provide a valuable opportunity to place one's inevitably fragmentary reading and ideas into context. Some of the clinical contributions, intended to give the neuroscientists a view of the problems from the bedside are less effective, neither expressing the dilemmas nor the paradoxes of clinical observation.

The varieties of style employed by the individual authors is a study in itself. Some introduce their subjects with an aphorism and end their sections with a pithy summary of current problems and the future direction of research. Others make no concession to the lay reader and plunge straight into a rigorous account of their subject and similarly end with one foot in the air as though they had run out of time. There is a particularly elegant account of neuro-immunology by Arnason which assumes no prior knowledge, uses no jargon and defines each specialised term as it is required. This struck me as being a model of clarity.

Is this encyclopaedic work successful? If it were to be judged solely on the grounds of insight into any individual clinical problem and its day to day management, the answer is probably no. If, however, the criterion is whether it will stimulate interest and imagination, enliven the practice of clinical neurology and the study of the natural history of the nervous system, I would regard it as being highly successful and enjoyable.

IT DRAPER

Cognitive Rehabilitation of Closed Head Injured Patients: A Dynamic Approach. By BB Adamovich, JA Henderson & S Auerbach. (Pp 200; £22.00.) Basingstoke: Taylor & Francis Ltd, 1985.

This book aims to describe the theoretical framework underpinning cognitive rehabilitation of closed head injury patients and to describe rehabilitation techniques based on this framework. The reader benefits from a short book, written in a clear taut prose style. But the book's brevity is also its main drawback. Insufficient space is devoted to the chapters explaining the theory of cognitive psychology and its relationship to the understanding of head injury. The reader would in many instances need to consult the source material. The authors quote studies about cognitive development of children but there is a lack of explanation of the relevance of these in understanding and rehabilitating post-traumatic cognitive impairment in

adults. In addition, there is insufficient discussion on the influence of emotional factors and social factors on the recovery and rehabilitation of the head injured, an omission which might lead to an over mechanistic approach to the problem.

The book is most successful in describing assessment and rehabilitation. In these areas the authors provide a clear and easily understood manual for the would-be rehabilitationist. Particularly valuable is the information on how to obtain test and treatment materials. Workers in institutions where only a few traumatically injured individuals are being treated will find this resource a great boon.

Most facilities where the head injured are rehabilitated would benefit from having this book on the library shelves. It is most likely to be consulted as a guide to assessment and therapy and as a rapid route to the relevant key literature. It is a pity that the cost of the book is likely to deter individual would-be purchasers. There has been a failure in the UK to provide facilities for head injury rehabilitation despite the fact that head injury is a common cause of disability in the young. Hopefully, the book will act as a stimulus, encouraging the development of more facilities in this neglected area.

MARTIN LIVINGSTON

Pharmacology of Affective Disorders: Theory and Practice. Edited by WG Dewhurst and GB Baker. (Pp 628; £40.00.) Beckenham: Croom Helm Ltd, 1985.

I found this a difficult book to read, for both typographical and editorial reasons. It looks like a series of single spaced typescripts with small margins; a strong light and powerful spectacles were needed. It is also somewhat short on informative tables and illustrations.

Editorially the book tries to do too much. By attempting to be comprehensive in a wide range of topics it ends up by being indigestible. For example, someone primarily interested in the useful chapter on childhood depression by Offord and Joffe is unlikely to be concerned with, or even understand, the arcane mysteries surrounding the detailed techniques of chromatography which take up over 30 pages of a preceeding chapter.

Even within chapters there is a tendency to pile on the information without attempting to give the reader any assistance by way of guidelines or summary. This is particularly true of the opening chapter on biochemical theories put forward, thus leaving the reader floundering in a sea of disconnected facts.

While there are many excellent individual

contributions, (notably that on animal models by Parsolt, on monoamine oxidase inhibitors by Murphy and his colleagues and on the chemotherapy of affective disorders in the elderly by Pitt) the overall impression of this book is one of denseness, both in appearance and in style. A book for the specialist library, not the consulting room.

TREVOR SILVERSTONE

Cerebral Vascular Spasm. Edited by D Volpert and P Glee. (Pp 515; £50.20.) New York: Walter de Gruyter, UK Distrib: Global Book Resources — London, 1985.

This book consists of the 55 papers presented at the 3rd Mainz Herbsttagung held in October 1983. The vast majority of contributors are European: over two-thirds are German or Austrian. There is no systematic attempt to cover the whole subject and the main topics covered are calcium dependence of cerebrovascular smooth muscle contraction, calcium blockers, preliminary presentation of small clinical trials and selected aspects of anatomy, pathology, cerebral haemodynamics and transcranial Doppler. All the most innovative work has already been published in refereed journals and the newcomer would be better served by reading the more digestible yet comprehensive "Cerebral Arterial Spasm", edited by R H Wilkins in 1980.

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