Book reviews

after this is space given to consideration of (as the authors put it in their preface) "diseases which express themselves by each syndrome." Such a format necessarily implies that reference is made to individual topics in sections of the book which may be widely spaced apart. Fortunately, the index appears comprehensive.

The range of the book is quite astonishing. Apart from the topics covered in all neurological textbooks, there are fairly extensive sections on growth and development of the nervous system and the neurology of ageing; also on psychiatric aspects of neurological disease and vice versa. In a book of this range it would be impossible for any reviewer not to disagree with something: this one, to take an example, finds the author's management of status epilepticus a little out of step with current practice in the UK. The only major criticism is that many of the line drawings are too small or too detailed to illuminate the text, and need special scrutiny on their own. This is unfortunate, as they are not of a quality to invite close attention.

These quibbles apart, there can be no doubt that this book should provide a model for medical textbooks in the future, not only those in neurology. It should be indispensable to any practising neurologist, neurological department or general medical library. It is not only readable; it is also stimulating. I can think of no other textbook which one could say is hard to put down: this one is!

G HARWOOD

Notes on Psychiatry 6th Ed. Edited by IM Ingram, GC Timbury and RM Mowbray. (Pp 167; £4.95.) Edinburgh: Churchill Livingstone, 1985.

The preface states: "These notes are deliberately concise. They are suitable for revision, but as an introduction must be supplemented by lectures, clinical experience and further reading. . . . Over the years they have been found useful by undergraduates and by postgraduates requiring to revise basic psychiatry quickly for examinations."

With this I would agree. The whole of psychiatry is covered in the 169 pages of this book. Each topic is adequately dealt with, information is up to date and easily assimilable by anyone wanting to refresh the memory the night before an examination. Of necessity, some chapters are rather limited in their scope; the whole of child and adoles-

cent psychiatry, for example, is dealt with in seven pages. But as a rapid overview this too will serve to excavate half-forgotten or deeply buried knowledge. The old faithfuls of affective illness and schizophrenia are adequately covered, although I would have liked to have seen a slightly greater emphasis on the current theories of the biochemical mechanisms underlying these.

The chapters on drug and physical treatments, drug abuse, organic states and old age have been rewritten for this edition and are now in line with modern thinking. In particular I was pleased to see a more realistic attitude towards drug abuse, reflecting the current view that not everyone who abuses heroin becomes permanently addicted (in the Vietnam study, only 7% were considered to be still drug dependent after three years). Information about the legal aspects of psychiatry has also been updated and takes into account the new Mental Health Act.

A useful revision book and one I would hope to see on most students shelves.

P FENWICK

The Neuropsychology of Memory. Edited by Larry R Squire & Nelson Butters. (Pp 655; £62.50.) London: Guildford Press, 1984.

This is a collection of 54 relatively short contributions from authors actively involved in research into memory and the neural systems which are involved in remembering and forgetting. This subject area encompasses a large and varied array of topics: those included in this volume range from the purely behavioural studies of human cognitive psychology to single unit recordings and biochemical analyses of the concomitants of learning in animals. The majority of chapters focus on theoretical, clinical and methodological issues rather than on the minutiae of data presentation. The result is a collation of summary statements of position by a number of respected investigators and their surveys of the relevant literature.

The book is organised into three sections: the first deals with memory and its impairment in human subjects and the second with investigations into the neuropsychology of non-human primate memory. The third is a somewhat heterogeneous collection of chapters entitled "Studies of Memory in Non Primates: Physiology, Pharmacology and Behaviour". This organisation according to "species" has lim-

ited usefulness; this is especially the case in the final section where there is little overlap between many of the problems and issues considered by the authors. Each section is very briefly introduced by the editors and the relevant areas of investigation are sketched out. Although this serves as a framework for subsequent reading, more detailed editorial commentary would have been of considerable use in highlighting the points of similarity, and difference between the various contributors and approaches. This is particularly the case since there is a general lack of cross referencing between contributions in the volume. Those interested in rapid reference will find the excellent index of considerable value, but the absence of abstracts and limited use of summaries at the end of chapters is likely to be a source of frustration. In general the volume is probably best considered an analogous to an extended journal "special issue" covering a wider range of topics than would be possible in many established journals rather than an integrated perspective on the current state of research into the substrate of memory.

The first section, on the neuropsychology of human memory, consists of 25 chapters the majority being written by established researchers in the field. Although this section is reasonably comprehensive there are other viewpoints which would have been welcome in a volume of this type, perhaps the most surprising omissions in this case being Squire and Butters' own views. The primary focus is on pathological conditions resulting in impaired event memory although normal memory and forgetting are also dealt with. The patterns of relative preservation, and relative loss of memory in various amnesic states are given detailed consideration and analysis and the basis of these dissociations are discussed in terms of differences in storage, process, strategy and neurochemistry. Due weight is given to the difficulties inherent in interpreting data from a heterogeneous group of patients some of whom are multiply handicapped. The second section compliments the first and discusses single unit recording and lesion studies in primates. These contributions are of uniformly high quality and document the recent progress that has been made in the fractionation and dissociation of components of "memory". These studies go somewhat beyond those reported in the section on human memory in investigating the role of cortical processing systems and their interaction with subcortical mechanisms.

In the third section a wide variety of topics is dealt with in the course of 22 chapters. They range from lesion and single unit