Book reviews

extremely expensive volume containing the author’s ideas on microvascular surgery for intracranial aneurysms based upon a decade of personal experience. The illustrations that necessarily occupy a large proportion of the book are evocative of the anatomical rather than in a surgical projection. Others are in an excessively schematic or artistic style which does not really contribute. A significant number, including those showing tracts of instruments and the author operating, are superfluous. In some introductory sections the author makes observations on the pathophysiology of cerebral blood flow following aneurysm rupture without any really appropriate or valuable discussion of the implications. Despite several attempts this reviewer was left unclear on the author’s view on the timing of operative intervention. In many places the English is somewhat stilted. The surgical approaches to a wide range of intracranial aneurysm are described and various aspects of technique mentioned but, the illustrations notwithstanding, the points made would not be readily understood by the inexperienced. Some ambitious microvascular anastomoses are described but no indication is given as to how frequently they have been used in practice and, as throughout, there is no analysis of results.

It is difficult to know who might benefit from this volume: the established surgeon will either agree or disagree and the novitiate will be unlikely to appreciate the points made. The presently available range of assistant’s eyepieces, closed circuit television and video equipment for the operating microscope leave the teaching of operative technique firmly where it started—in the operating room. This book cannot be recommended.

J PUNT


Behavioural neurology is a large and difficult subject and is mastered by very few neurologists, certainly in the UK. For any who wish to make the effort this is perhaps the best general introduction at the moment. After an especially well thought out introductory chapter on anatomy and other basic aspects there is a good chapter on mental status examination, supplemented by a brief referenced description of many of the more commonly used special neuropsychological tests. There follows a series of chapters on different aspects of cerebral dysfunction. Dr Mesulam who contributes a substantial section of the book, notably the early chapters just mentioned, can be congratulated on his choice of co-authors who all excel to a greater or lesser degree. Together they have produced an excellent volume more or less comprehensive and not too psychologically orientated to inhibit the dedicated neurological student.

J MEADOWS


This book records the papers presented at the successful Evoked Potentials Symposium which was held in Rome in 1984, though curiously the published work makes no mention of that meeting. The papers are grouped under the usual four headings according to stimulus modality: somatosensory, auditory, visual and multimodality evoked potentials. Articles summarising current ideas by acknowledged leaders in the field are interspersed with data on a wide variety of clinical conditions. Thus we find Desmedt on SEP generator sources, Starr on the auditory pathway origins of the brainstem responses and Celesia on VEP and positron emission tomography correlation, as well as authoritative papers by the Cracos, Matthews, Jones, Halliday, Kjaer and Bodis-Wolner, to name a few of the well known contributors. Not all of this work is especially new of course, and one or two of the illustrations are very familiar indeed, but I found it helpful and convenient to have these papers in a single volume. It is interesting to compare this book with Clinical Applications of Evoked Potentials in Neurology (editors Courjon, Mauguire and Revol), a work well known to EP buffs and also the proceedings of a conference, in Lyon in 1980. The most obvious, though not particularly surprising difference between the present volume and the earlier one is the decline in papers about EPs in multiple sclerosis: only two compared with 21. Less too on long-latency event related potentials than in 1980; this certainly would have surprised me six years ago when there were ideas around about P300 latency providing some sort of objective measure of dementia, but clinically at least, promise has still to be fulfilled here. One might have expected more on evoked potentials in neurosurgical monitoring by now but though auditory and somatosensory evoked potentials have established roles we still lack a visual stimulus which balances sensitivity and specificity successfully in the operating theatre. Notable increases since 1980 are papers on clinical applications of EPs other than demyelinating diseases: for example Friedreich’s ataxia, diabetes mellitus, neuromyelitis optica and pseudotumour cerebri among others. There are also useful articles on two important growth areas: the electroretinogram, both to flash and pattern stimulation and central motor conduction: there Rossini’s “unifocal” technique of low voltage transcutaneous cortical stimulation is described.

This book is a useful addition to any evoked potentials laboratory library if one can afford it; it contains reviews of the basic science and many suggestions for clinical applications, generally with sufficient information on methodology to allow one to try out a new technique without further recourse to the literature.

NMF MURRAY


It is apparent that there is much common ground between neurology and psychiatry. The traditional distinction between “organic” disorders (neurology) and “functional” disorders (psychiatry) is increasingly difficult to sustain. The borderland is sometimes referred to by psychiatrists as “neuro-psychiatry”, “organic or biological psychiatry”, and by neurologists as “behavioural neurology” and “neuropsychology”. There may well be subtle differences between the meanings and implications of these terms but broadly they encompass the border zone between neurology and psychiatry which this book attempts to explore. In the UK at present this borderland is mainly populated by psychiatrists and the subject hardly exists as a neurological discipline. In the USA on the other hand neurologists perhaps more than psychiatrists have contributed to the field, but American psychiatry is currently moving steadily in this direction away from its previous psychodynamic emphasis. It is appropriate therefore that the book is written jointly by an American neurologist and