

be difficult to find anyone who would not be stimulated by the introductory chapter and the section on genetics.

The volume is however a great credit to all who have taken part in its production. The editors have certainly managed to attract every possible authority to contribute, and there is no doubt that it will stand for some time as the standard comprehensive state of the art book. The editors have completely succeeded in their aims, and deserve to be congratulated. It seems doubtful that another seventeen years will elapse between the publication of this volume and any successor. The excellence of this book is likely in itself to speed its own obsolescence by acting as a stimulus to further research.

G CHADWICK

Psychiatric Aspects of Trauma.

(*Advances in Psychosomatic Medicine Vol 16*). Edited by Linda Gay Peterson, GJ O'Shanick. (Pp 238; £31.00.). Basel: Karger, 1986.

Psychosomatic medicine is sufficiently vague to encompass a wide range of subjects that do not normally merit the adjective of psychosomatic. In this multi-author book from the USA there are chapters on child abuse, grief, the neuropsychiatry and rehabilitation of head injury; in short, a range of psychiatry with only one common attribute, trauma. However, as trauma itself covers a large spectrum between severe physical insults to exaggerated mental reactions to stress it is difficult even to hold to this tiny thread as one reads through this book.

The neuropsychologist who is well aware of Luria's functional units will find the chapter by Hayden and Hart valuable but is unlikely to be interested in the dynamic pathology of child abusers. Similarly, the nosologist who is interested in the American concept of post traumatic stress disorder will find much useful information in Silverman's chapter but is likely to skip rapidly over a chapter by Suhr on the reactions of children to trauma. As is common with multi-author texts, the standard of writing varies considerably, ranging from an excellent contribution by Brown which reports graphically the emotional responses of the victims of major traumatic events and the sloppy presentation of Reilly and his colleagues on alcohol use in which the word "trauma" is massaged mercilessly. After a sentence beginning "the person dealing with the common post-trauma seem at pain, alcohol post-

trauma, and drug abuse treatment" the reader is bound to be confused!

In a series such as this Muggetts and Dross will appear in equal proportions and only libraries can be expected to purchase them. A cross referencing system is needed for the whole series so the interested reader knows where to look.

PETER TYRER

An Introduction to the Diagnosis and Management of Common Neurologic Disorders. (Formerly titled *Modern Practical Neurology*.) 3rd ed. By Peritz Scheinberg. (Pp 296; \$31.50.) New York: Raven Press, 1986.

The 3rd edition of *Modern Practical Neurology* has just been published under its new and rather too elaborate title. This volume covers in 16 chapters all the main adult neurological diagnoses and in the newly added final chapter gives a useful introduction to paediatric neurology. The book achieves a reasonably good balance between major common conditions such as cerebrovascular disease and dementia and the rarer diagnoses most of which are mentioned. It also gives the recent scientific background to conditions where this knowledge is available.

Its advice on management however needs to be treated with caution. This may reflect differences between current English and North American practice. The suggestion that anticoagulation is appropriate treatment for mitral valve prolapse and that phenytoin is as effective as carbamazepine in the treatment of trigeminal neuralgia are examples. It is as though the book sets itself too comprehensive a task for a short manual. It allows itself only one paragraph on motor neuron disease and no space at all to mention the aims of supportive therapy in this condition. Prolactinomas and their response to bromocriptine are omitted. The surgical advice is surprisingly conservative in places. Benefits of evacuating cerebellar and brain stem haematomas are ignored as is the need for surgery in a not insignificant number of patients with benign intracranial hypertension.

The book is well illustrated with neuroradiological images including those derived from magnetic resonance as well as photographs of numerous excellent neuropathological specimens. It is a pity that so few clinical pictures are included. The references are plentiful and up-to-date.

In the preface the author says that his "intended audience is medical students, house officers and physicians who encounter patients with neurological disorders". The book assumes much more knowledge than the average British medical student (and probably house officer) has, particularly in the area of specialised neurological investigations. Terms such as evoked responses and oligoclonal bands are used without explanation. The book at £24 is significantly more expensive than some of its English counterparts such as the shorter version of *Brain's Clinical Neurology* at £12.50 and *Neurology* (RW Ross Russell and CM Wiles) at £10. It is therefore to be recommended to better-off junior doctors and general practitioners.

F SCHON

Notices

9th International Symposium on Parkinson's Disease. Jerusalem, Israel. 5-9 June 1988. Further information may be obtained from The Secretariat, POB 50006, Tel-Aviv 61500, Israel.

VII International Congress on Neuro-muscular Diseases. This Congress will be held in Munich 17-22 September 1990. Information may be obtained from Dr F Lehmann-Horn, Neurologische Klinik und Poliklinik, Technische Universität München, Mohlstrasse 28, D-8000 Munich 80, FRG.