physicians, surgeons and pathologists will find helpful in the management of patients with temporal lobe epilepsy, and in interpretation of the morphological features of the lesions. I would have liked better quality illustrations but the price of the publication has been kept remarkably low.

F SCARAVILLI

Introduction to Neuropathology. By J Hume Adams, D I Graham. (Pp 309; £29.95.) Edinburgh: Churchill Livingstone, 1988.

An introduction for whom, to what? In their own words, the authors hope that the book will be of help not only to pathologists in training but also to experienced pathologists and to clinicians in the wider field of the neurological sciences. It is indeed a very good book for pathologists as it includes not only a clear introduction to brain cutting and histological techniques but also contains succinct, well-illustrated accounts of all the major areas of neuropathology. There are few references but probably sufficient to allow the reader to pass on to more detailed accounts of selected topics.

What is the relevance of this book to clinicians in the wider field of the neurological sciences? Is pathology any longer relevant to the practising clinician? Neurologists, neurosurgeons, neuroradiologists and psychiatrists must have all become much more aware of clinicopathological correlations with the introduction of improved CT, magnetic resonance imaging and other imaging techniques. Correct interpretation of the images requires more than a passing knowledge of the nature of the pathological lesions themselves. In this context, this very moderately priced book of some 300 pages is an excellent introduction to neuropathology.

The chapter on intracranial expanding lesions, cerebral oedema and hydrocephalus concentrates on the pathophysiological correlations relating intracranial pressure, blood flow and the damage caused to the brain as a result of space-occupying lesions and hydrocephalus. A similar approach is seen in the section on vascular and hypoxic disorders, a chapter that is well-illustrated with a mixture of macroscopic and microscopic appearances and diagrams. Broad surveys of bacterial infections, viral infections, fungal diseases and parasitic infestations are also well-illustrated.

The authors have a very wide experience of clinical neuropathology and this experience is reflected in their approach to the book. Neurosurgeons will find the chapters

on trauma and tumours particularly useful as they are two of the special interests of the authors. Other sections of the book, however, including demyelinating diseases, metabolic disorders, deficiency disorders and intoxication, system disorders, development, ageing and dementias are also expertly covered. The book ends with a brief survey of muscle and peripheral nerve diseases by Dr DGF Harriman.

Authors writing short textbooks covering wide areas always face the problems of how to express complex concepts in few words. Details may obscure the main purpose of the book or even bore the audience, whereas too brief an account may leave the author uninformed. I am sure that readers using this book to seek information on individual diseases or even if they are reading the book from cover to cover will find areas in which there is insufficient depth. This is unavoidable, but for the most part the broad concepts of neuropathology are expressed in a very lucid fashion and there is sufficient indication of how to find more detailed accounts. The general layout of the book is pleasing, but there are some rather unsightly arrangements of the illustrations in which the pictures have disappeared off the top of the page.

Perhaps my only criticism is reserved for the chapter entitled "The central nervous system and its reactions to disease". This section contains an account of the anatomy of the central nervous system which would be a useful revision manual for an experienced neuroanatomist but does not have the broad conceptual approach of the other chapters. This, however, is a minor criticism in an otherwise valuable book which I am sure will have a wide appeal to pathologists and clinical neuroscientists.

RO WELLER

Northfield's Surgery of the Central Nervous System 2nd ed. Edited by JD Miller. (Pp 893; £120.00.) Oxford: Blackwell Scientific Publications, 1987.

I was lucky enough to acquire a first edition of *Northfield's Surgery of the Central Nervous System* in 1976 before it went out of print. Thereafter available copies were treated like gold dust. I am sure this long awaited second edition incorporating many advances in neuro-imaging and patient management will be held in similar esteem. Some chapters have been extensively rewritten; others are little changed. In general the format remains the same and *Northfield's*' readable style persists.

Although of interest to all neurosurgeons, the book is still aimed at the neurosurgical trainee. It begins with a new introductory chapter by Professor Miller and includes a useful check list for revision as well as a few comments on neurological examination. I was surprised to read that Professor Miller believes that "assessment of the level of consciousness must always be accompanied by.... the oculo-cardiac reflex" among other things. His subsequent chapter on intracranial pressure is a model of clarity and considerably improves the original. The neuroradiology chapter has also been extensively revised. All the older imaging techniques are still included but described in conjunction with CT scanning and magnetic resonance imaging. Again this chapter is clearly written, but I was disappointed with the section on MRI which would be hard to follow without some pre-existing knowledge of the technique.

The chapters on tumours concentrate as before on the clinical aspects and offer a pragmatic approach to management. Perhaps a book of this size should have included more on basic research, updating the reader in subjects such as tumour immunology. The vascular section includes a new chapter on stroke and TIAs. Although few neurosurgeons now intervene in these conditions, I am sure that most still find this topic of considerable interest. Despite a 31 page chapter on hydrocephalus, only a few lines are devoted to "normal pressure hydrocephalus". Patients suspected of harbouring this condition are frequently referred to neurosurgeons. A text such as this should contain more on the problems of diagnosis and management. Similarly in an otherwise excellent chapter on spinal degenerative disease, more could have been said on lumbar spinal stenosis.

Every chapter is extensively referenced, but it is disappointing that the reference titles are not included. Surely the extra 30 to 40 pages required would be worthwhile?

These are minor points. This new edition provides a mass of valuable information in a single text. I have no doubt that the book will remain a favourite with both neurosurgical trainees and neurosurgeons throughout the world.

KW LINDSAY

Presurgical Evaluation of Epileptics. Edited by H-G Wieser, C Elger. (Pp 415; DM 258.00.) Berlin: Springer-Verlag, 1987.

I greatly enjoyed reading this book, and think that it is an important contribution to

the literature on epilepsy surgery. The book was conceived at the International Symposium on Methods of Presurgical Evaluation of Epileptic Patients held in Zurich in 1985, as a tribute to Professor Rudolf Hess. However, it is quite different from the usual publications that follow symposia, and it is organised more in the form of a text book.

It may be divided into four main sections, dealing with basic mechanisms, diagnostic procedures, semiology and surgical treatment. These topics are further divided into a total of 53 chapters, each about 5–7 pages long, usually written by a leading expert in the field with appropriate authority. In addition there are nine brief editorial sections summarising the discussions held at the symposium. The text is well laid out and the reproductions are excellent.

The expressed aim of the editors was that the contributors should concentrate on the more generally valid aspects of each topic, and I think that it is this intention which has led the book to have such merit.

The presurgical evaluation of patients with epilepsy involves a multidisciplinary approach, using clinical skills and psychological, physiological and imaging techniques. These methods are becoming increasingly sophisticated, and have changed a great deal over the last decade. It is essential that workers specialising in one particular aspect are aware of important progress in the associated disciplines in order to efficiently use resources. Certainly the individual topics covered are dealt with in a manner which allows such an integration.

Janz has provided a concluding chapter, in which he considers the implications of these advances for the organisation of epilepsy services in Europe. His overall perspective is interesting. He suggests that the surgical treatment of such patients should be undertaken at six to eight centres in order to concentrate the necessary range of techniques.

I have no hesitation in recommending this book to workers dealing with patients suffering from intractable epilepsy. It is easily read and provides an integration of information that will date less rapidly than most publications in this field.

D FISH

Current Neuro-Ophthalmology Vol I. Edited by Simmons Lessell, JTW Van Dalen. (Pp 367; £64.00.) London: Wolfe Medical, 1988.

Neuro-ophthalmology is a discipline that combines elements of ophthalmology with

neurology and neurosurgery, ENT surgery, radiology, general and paediatric medicine. The annual literature produced by these specialities, varying proportions of which will have neuro-ophthalmological relevance, is enormous. With the development of new techniques within specialities such as MRI and computerised visual field analysis the task of keeping up to date in the subject becomes increasingly more demanding. *Current Neuro-ophthalmology* addresses this problem.

The editors have included 21 chapters, divided into six parts; The Afferent Visual System, The Ocular Motor System, The Pupil, The Orbit, Ocular Manifestation of Neurological Disease, and Diagnostic Methods. The coverage is slightly unbalanced; there is, for example, considerable overlap in the first four chapters (66 pages) (each excellent in its own way) on the optic nerve and chiasm. On the other hand, infranuclear disorders of the ocular motor system, here titled Non Myasthenic Ophthalmoplegia, is covered in 13 pages. Most of the chapter authors have followed their editors' instructions in comprehensively reviewing the previous three years output on their subject. They assume a high level of knowledge in the readership, allowing discussion of new developments to be thorough without being lengthy. This is as it should be. In some chapters, however, such as that on the Neural Integrator of the Ocular Motor System, and the VEP and ERG in clinical neuro-ophthalmology, we are taken through the subject from a more basic level. These latter contributions perhaps belong in a postgraduate text book of the subject rather than update on recent advances. Overall, however, the coverage and standard of review are extremely high.

Some authors introduce a more personal note; I particularly enjoyed Jon Currie's opinionated and punchy review of optic neuritis, and Stanley Thompson's masterly guidance through the pupil literature. Dr Dell'Oosso managed to condense discussion of 160 references on nystagmus and related ocular oscillations into just over 20 pages. Practical advice regarding the usefulness of various diagnostic procedures in for example carotid artery disease affecting the eye, and in the CT versus MRI argument is also provided.

The editors have set themselves an ambitious target and have admirably succeeded; at £64, all practicing neuro-ophthalmologists should have a copy of this volume on their shelves to complement the standard texts.

JOHN ELSTON

The Treatment of Infantile Hydrocephalus 2 vols. By Concezio Di Rocco. (Pp 325; 2 Vols set £146.50.) Boca Raton: CRC Press. UK Distrib: Wolfe Medical, 1988.

The author has painstakingly compiled a review of hydrocephalus; both historical and contemporary aspects are dealt with. As far as his own experience and a reading of the literature provide answers to the many questions that have to be asked, the result is very satisfying. This is not to say that the answers are satisfying. Our understanding of the mechanism of ventricular enlargement, of brain elasticity, of how to maintain appropriate intracranial pressure over a long period of time, leaves much to be desired. Dr Di Rocco has, however, omitted little of what is at present known, and not unnaturally devotes most of his book to the management of hydrocephalus. The occasional infelicities of language and incorrect choice of word do not obscure his meaning.

It would be pleasing if I could write that already this book is out of date. Unhappily the rate of progress in this field is very slow, so that the book can be recommended as a helpful overview of the present state of affairs.

KENNETH THOMAS

Neurosurgeons of the Past. By Louis Bakay. (Pp 109; \$28.50.) Illinois: Charles C Thomas, 1987.

This is a selective account of the activities of certain surgeons, from medieval times onwards, who were particularly concerned with the cranium and its contents. And a good selection it is too. Since we all have our heroes, I will get one quibble over right away and say that the mere passing reference to Percivall Pott was a disappointment. This was, however, softened—not only by Dr Bakay's rare feat in recognising the unusual way that Pott always spelt his first name, but also by the omission of the knighthood conferred many years ago on the great man (albeit deservedly) by Wechsler in his textbook. But Dr Bakay is wrong to say that Pott wrote his elegant treatise on head injuries in 1808 (he had then been dead twenty years); the first edition had appeared in 1760.

It is always agreeable to find a medical book which is a good read rather than tediously informative. Dr Bakay writes chatily and well, recounting early case-histories and giving us nicely reproduced illustrations of the barbarous instruments of the times