ischaemic deficit and vasospasm, and the reasons for its variability.

In several chapters detailed summaries of much of the relevant literature are given, and in fact comprise the bulk of the text. This has resulted in very large sections on some topics, and it would have been preferable to have organised the material under more detailed sub-headings. For example, sixteen columns of text on paediatric patients or twenty on timing of surgery and outcome, without a single sub-heading, makes much of the material inaccessible and detracts from its potential value as a source of advice and references. Although a collection of extensive literature reviews can be useful (and these are very comprehensive) it does not always make for stimulating reading. This format also results in considerable repetition, as for example in the descriptions of similar treatments of vasospasm in several papers in the literature. More importantly, the author sometimes fails to give his own views the prominence they deserve; they are often confined to a single sentence at the conclusion of an extensive literature summary. For this reason, and because of the comprehensive scale of the book, a reader seeking answers to specific questions will need to be prepared to set aside a fair amount of time.

The illustrations are all informative and of high quality; those in the chapter on anatomy are especially good. This book will be a valuable acquisition for a departmental library, and it should be considered for individual purchase for the sake of the chapters on anatomy, physiology and vasospasm. Extensive description of original papers in books such as this will become less necessary in the future as local access to computerised reference databases become easier and cheaper.

AJ STRONG

Headache (Practical Clinical Medicine Series). Edited by T Fowler. (Pp 230; £25.00.) Lancaster: MTP Press, 1987.

Granted a little literary license, the neurologist might paraphrase Osler by saying: know headache and you know neurology. Certainly an understanding of the diverse diseases of the cranium and its contents which cause headache guarantees a sound knowledge of much of medical and surgical neurology. This handy paperback is not a specialist's manual concerned with the latest theories of migraine and other headaches, nor does it embrace their pharmacology or

treatment in any detail; rather it is a manual, principally concerned with diagnosis of headache patients, dealing with acute meningeal crises, recurring and chronic headaches, their causes and management. It is deliberately a practical guide aimed at the General Practitioner and the Physician in a district general hospital.

It is edited by Tim Fowler who has sought the able assistance of BGR Neville on headache in children, MM Sharr on various neurosurgical topics and AS Sandhu on the radiological investigation. In 223 pages and nine chapters they summarise the practical aspects of a difficult and complex topic with admirable clarity and a fund of good clinical sense.

There are some helpful line diagrams and tables and a series of boxes containing summaries of important practical points and aides memoirs highlighted by the black blobs reminiscent of some better post-graduate educational journals. The neurologist will find points of difference of opinion and emphasis. He or she will not necessarily agree that acyclovir reduces the incidence of post herpetic neuralgia, that cluster headache is a variant of migraine, and may feel that the value of CT in the diagnosis of subarachnoid haemorrhage is overestimated. The general medical and neurological Senior House Officer and Registrar will find this a useful and sound book to have in the ward, especially when dealing with emergencies. And the GP's skills and pattern of referral will be greatly facilitated if he puts into effect the principles laid down here.

This is a welcome addition to the growing literature on headache and I warmly recommend it to the non-specialist.

JMS PEARCE

Diagnosis and Classification in Psychiatry. A Critical Appraisal of DSM III. Edited by GL Tischler. (Pp 546; £40.00.) Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987.

The American system of classification of mental illness (DSM III) is by now widely accepted by clinicians and is an indispensable part of the research armamentarium. A revision of the DSM III, the DSM IIIR, has already been published and a new edition, the DSM IV, is due out in 1992. It seems likely that until then many man-hours will be spent in validating and refining the diagnostic criteria.

This book originated from a three day conference sponsored by the Board of Trustees of the American Psychiatric Association and it is the departure point towards the preparation of the DSM IV. The diagnostic categories included in the DSM III are examined in turn, paying special attention to their reliability, validity and problems encountered in defining the boundaries of the various disorders. A number of specific suggestions are made to modify some of these categories. Personality disorders bear the brunt of the criticism, but other diagnostic categories such as those covering the diseases of childhood and adolescence are also likely to be modified in future editions. Affective illness and schizophrenia appear to have stood the test of time better, while the category of organic mental disorders is likely to incorporate some focal syndromes in future and to have stricter guidelines to increase the reliability of the clinical diagnosis.

At first sight a book devoted to discussing the classification of mental illness is unlikely to appeal to a wide readership and I must confess that was my feeling when confronted with the title. However, having read it I feel obliged to change this premature view, and has given me many hours of enjoyable and profitable reading. What made the book for me were the scholarly and succinct reviews of many important topics written by leading American experts and often spanning biological, epidemiological and psychological aspects. By the end of the book I felt I had been taken for a grand tour of current psychiatric research and conceptual thinking in psychiatry, and I had nearly forgotten that the book was about the more arid topic of classification. Even when to forget that was impossible, as in the chapters dealing with the virtues of multiaxial and hierarchical approaches to classification, my interest was constantly engaged. I have no hesitation in recommending this book to those looking for a panoramic, yet detailed, view of psychiatric research as well as to those with a special interest in classification.

MARIA A RON

Clinical Neuroendocrinology 2 ed. By Joseph B Martin and Seymour Riechlin. (Pp 759; \$90.00.) Philadelphia: FA Davis. UK Distrib: Quest Meridian, 1987.

The authors have clearly invested enormous energy and enthusiasm in this book. They have provided a fully referenced text