eral outline and style of the book in the format of small chapters allocated to specific problems and clearly defined topics is admirable and easy to follow. The historical approach to a point of discussion which most authors followed is very enjoyable. This is quite important to grasp the evolution of our understanding and how "a small plant has grown into a remarkable tree". The book presents a successful mixture of academic and clinical elements to a degree that makes it appealing but some chapters were more successful than others in this regard. The subjects are generally well referenced though every now and then I encountered some inadequacies in this regard (pages 95, 166, 763, 797, 828 ... etc) and noted that British and European contributions have a smaller share of quotation in general, not an exceptional observation in most reviews from across the Atlantic.

Some chapters stand out better than the others. I particularly liked the ones on Epileptic Seizure Disorders by Niedermeyer and Nonspecific Abnormal EEG Patterns by Sharbrough. I was disappointed by others like the chapter on Activation Methods by Takahashi. Some individualistic approach about certain problems in the EEG on which there is no wide agreement and which sometimes appears in the book is most evident in this chapter especially in relation to the subject of photosensitivity. I was also surprised to find that this phenomenon was not treated in greater depth. The book has tried to have a total grip of new changes in the field of the EEG. Chapter 2 referred to some new advances in localising current fields within the brain using magnets but the chapter was disappointingly short and could have expanded more to include some of the most recent clinical data. There is also no adequate mention of the Cerebral Function Monitor of Prior and Maynard which draws admiration from many clinicians especially in monitoring for status epilepticus.

The section on evoked potentials has enlarged from two to six chapters. In the chapter on VEP, Celesia uses the term "transient-VEP". This is a new term to me. The author states that transient-VEP could be produced by patterned and unpatterned stimuli but later on uses the same term when talking about pattern reversal VEP. Multiplicity of terms is always confusing especially to newcomers to the field. In this chapter derivations are not adequately shown on the diagrams nor explained in the text. Many people would not agree with the statement that "Absence or prominent amplitude depression of responses to stimulation of both temporal or both nasal fields is

unequivocal evidence of chiasmic impairment". This is probably true in most cases but we are all aware of the effect of variability of visual fixation and vigilance levels which can occasionally produce changes that mimic pathological conditions. I think that the term "unequivocal" is too forceful.

I was very pleased to see the cautious approach to the interpretation of the BAEP adopted by the chapter on this subject by Celesia and Grigg. The widespread application of EPs has led to concern among many of us about overuse and misuse in addition to quality and standardisation.

Among the chapters on EPs, I liked most the one on SEPs by Erwin *et al.* Though it adopts the American EEG Society's guidelines for methodology and techniques (which I personally use) it presents excellent reviews for these with arguments for and against each. It clarifies some of the confusion in the literature about the terminology of various components and presents a good account on the concept of far and near field potentials which most textbooks on the subject fail to provide. Overall this chapter has well served the purpose of a short account on the SEP and its applications and limitations.

Other points include: no strict standardisation of symbols and terminology is present (for example frequencies are described in various ways and EEG diagrams are presented in various styles where montages are indicated either by symbols or head diagrams). EEG traces are generally adequately reproduced except occasionally (such as fig 51.7) but some of the diagrams in the EP section do not have montages and derivations indicated on them. I noticed some mistakes in the indexing (infantile spasm: 367-369) and many typographical errors (pages 770, 809, 820, 828 ... etc).

This is welcome as a book to review the state of affairs in this subject especially being a large one volume textbook. It certainly has a place in between the huge multivolume handbook and a number of smaller books. I wish this textbook well and I am certainly pleased to have a copy of it and warmly recommend it to colleagues. The book is admirably reasonably priced for its size in a hardback version.

GORAN A JAMAL

Concepts in Pediatric Neurosurgery Vol 8.
Edited by A E Marlin. (Pp 224; £84.60.)
Basel: S Karger, 1988.

This is the eighth in the Annual series that records the proceedings of the American

Society for Paediatric Neurosurgery.

I have criticised the dullness of previous editions in past reviews but in this volume the standard has definitely improved. For to start, there appears to be a discernible theme, the first 12 chapters (out of 22) are concerned with various aspects of spina bifida, the Chiari malformation and hydrocephalus (readers of a practical disposition should not be put off by the first chapter, The Application of Mathematical Modeling to Hydrocephalus Research by Rekate *et al.*, in which computer simulations are manipulated until they conform to clinical observation!). Two chapters on myelomeningocele repair and three on the Chiari malformation allow sufficient elbow room for individual ideas and possible areas of controversy to become discernible. Later chapters cover a variety of subjects including ultrasound examination of the paediatric spine, treatment of the rare os odontoideum and (from Epstein) a clear statement of the indications and limitations of surgery for childhood brainstem tumours.

RICHARD HAYWARD

Examination of the Cranial & Peripheral Nerves. By Orrin Devinsky and E Feldman. (Pp 117; £11.95.) Edinburgh: Churchill Livingstone, 1988.

This paperback contains useful dermatome, peripheral nerve and sclerotome charts with extensive tables on segmental and peripheral innervation of muscles. There is also a section on testing individual muscles very similar to that in the Medical Research Council's booklet—"Aids to the examination of the peripheral nervous system". The authors claim this to be an "easily accessible, succinct reference" work and certainly this applies to peripheral nerves. It is well laid out and will fit into the pocket.

The inclusion of "Cranial" in the title is misleading for apart from an anatomical list and a figure for trigeminal sensory innervation, detailed examinations of the cranial nerves are not discussed. There is a helpful short section on autonomic function (although no mention of the use of weak pilocarpine in testing for denervation hypersensitivity in the pupil) and some brief notes on examination technique, entrapment syndromes and hysterical patterns.

Although there is a wealth of information in this work, in my view it will not replace the MRC publication in the United Kingdom particularly as the latter is significantly cheaper.

T FOWLER