Book reviews

couldn't understand why his old friends had left him".

PETER WESTON

Reference

- 1 Brooks N. 1984. Closed Head Injury—Psychological, Social and Family consequences. Oxford University Press. ISBN 0 19 261252 2.

Vestibular Disorders. Edited by Hugh O Barber, James A Sharpe. (Pp 262; £33.50.) Chicago: Year Book Medical. UK Distrib: Wolfe Medical, 1988.

Vestibular disorders are perhaps the most frequent reason for a patient to see his doctor or for the family physician to refer a patient to hospital. The coincidence of this fact with the significant advances made by scientists in understanding the physiology of the vestibular system no doubt account for the large number of publications concerned with vertigo, dizziness and vestibular dysfunction that have appeared in the past decade or so. Most of these publications have suffered from the usual problem of multi-authorship if they have any clinical orientation viz: incongruity of style, repetition and varying standards. Although the present work falls foul of these criticisms, it is nevertheless worth reading and as the editors point out, it is not meant to be encyclopaedic but it is intended to be sufficiently broad to satisfy the needs of experienced otologists and neurologists and to provide some foundation for residents.

As is conventional in monographs the science precedes the clinical section and therapy appears at the end. Part one concerns neurophysiology of orientation and the first chapter by Melvill Jones is well worth attention. Part two describes testing the vestibular ocular reflex and is the weakest section of the book since it comprises chapters written in the form of papers and is too specialised for the average reader. For example, the whole chapter on the receiver operated characteristic (ROC) methodology is not going to excite many readers who would be well advised to spend the 30 minutes it takes to read the chapter doing something else. Part 3 is good and deals with smooth pursuit movements. As one expects, Dr Zee's chapter on new concepts of vestibular nystagmus is lucid, to the point and written by someone totally at home with his subject. He also writes a sound chapter on treatment in the final section on dizziness, diagnoses and therapy. The remainder of

that section however, is not terribly good and says little that is new.

Overall a reasonable book. It is certainly worth photostating 3 or 4 of the chapters from the library copy for one's personal use.

P RUDGE

Memory Disorders in Clinical Practice. By N Kapur. (Pp 289; £39.50.) Guildford: Butterworth, 1988.

Skills in assessing memory are basic to the clinician's armamentarium. Complex and often changing theories of memory may be difficult to grasp and a book dealing with the clinical deficits caused by specific diseases should be welcomed. Kapur's book covers the memory disturbances caused by tumours, cerebrovascular disease, trauma, various dementias, infectious and metabolic diseases, toxic and deficiency states, epilepsy and various surgical procedures such as leucotomy. A simple glossary of the terms used in the book is also included.

This tightly packed book contains a wealth of references and the description of published case reports would be undoubtedly useful to the clinician. Unfortunately, the book lacks a theoretical frame of reference and a general discussion of the anatomical substratum of memory, which could have provided a link between the similar disturbances that can result from different pathologies. Without this structure some of the sections are repetitive, even though they contain useful information. As a clinician I would also have liked to see the memory disturbances set in the wider context of other cognitive deficits commonly present in these conditions. The book is at its best when dealing with ablation and disconnection of cerebral tissue and with head injuries.

MARIA M RON

Atlas of Neuropathology. By Haruo Okazaki, Bernd W Scheithauer. (Pp 315; £80.00.) London: Gower, 1988.

In recent years the techniques of reproduction of colour pictures in scientific books and journals have reached levels nearing perfection and this *Atlas of Neuropathology* is no exception. It consists of eight chapters but, as the authors point out in their Foreword, the lion's share is taken by the chapter on tumours.

Chapter 1 illustrates, using predominantly monoscopic pictures, the damages produced

by cerebrovascular diseases. The lesions that develop after occlusion of the main cerebral vessels are shown in whole brains or coronal sections and are integrated with an occasional CT image or whole mount sections. Infectious diseases is the topic of chapter 2 which I would have liked to include a few more representatives of protozoa (no mention of malaria) as well as metazoal infections. The section on tumour (chapter 3) begins with useful diagrams about incidence and survival rates, localisation, differential diagnosis and histological classification and grading of gliomas. Macro- and microscopic pictures are correlated with CT scans and a few electron micrographs and examples of immunohistochemical staining. If the latter are useful to acquaint the reader with this technique, they do not help much in sorting out difficult cases, and give perhaps the wrong impression about the degree of specificity of monoclonal antibodies.

The chapter on degenerative diseases (No 4) does not reflect, in my opinion, the recent advances in the knowledge in this field and the examples produced are too few to make this section a useful aid in diagnosis. Chapter 5 (demyelinating diseases) describes at some length the appearances of acute multiple sclerosis, a type of presentation of this disease not many pathologists are familiar with. The rest of the chapter is a collection of beautiful pictures on diseases some of which many pathologists might see, with some luck, once in their lifetime.

Toxic metabolic diseases include alcoholic and hepatic encephalopathies and other "classical" examples. While I agree that some disorders are difficult to classify, I am surprised to find "paraneoplastic" syndromes among this group. As in some of the previous chapters some recent achievements in the field are not mentioned or illustrated. The last two chapters on brain trauma (No 7) and perinatal and congenital lesions (No 8) could have benefitted from a few diagrams, like those in Chapter 3. Chapter 8 deals with a subject which is still unclear and unsettled and some basic information about stages of development could have helped a lot.

A beautiful book over which I spent some time admiring the quality of the pictures. However, when it comes down to whether or not to recommend it for purchase, I must point out that some important topics have been omitted and others only superficially dealt with. This is a common setback in a publication, such as an atlas, which is based on personal material; but has to be taken into account when one has to choose the best tools for diagnostic purposes.

F SCARAVILLI