

## Book reviews

traces, but these are small matters.

It is right and proper that the Foreword should contain a fulsome acknowledgement of the work of Merton and Morton, and almost every paper refers to the discoveries of this remarkable pair. Without them, techniques for non-invasive stimulation of the brain and cord would not exist.

CLARE J FOWLER

**The Lennox-Gastaut Syndrome.** Edited by Ernst Niedermeyer, Rolf Degen. (Pp 500; \$88.00.) New York: Alan R Liss, 1988.

This is the 45th volume of the *Neurology and Neurobiology* series, and the first in this series to be devoted entirely to epilepsy. It is in fact the proceedings of a conference held in Bad Kreuznach, in September 1987, concerned with many aspects of the Lennox Gastaut syndrome. The book consists of 30 chapters, by over 70 distinguished contributors from the world of paediatric neurology and epileptology. The Lennox Gastaut syndrome was first defined in 1966 and since then has been extensively discussed, although whether the constellation of signs constitutes a specific syndrome is questionable (an issue not addressed in this text). What does this book contribute? It undoubtedly provides the most accessible source of reference material about the syndrome, and covers a wide range of topics. Some are important, recent, and not available in the English language literature, and are well covered here. As with so many published proceedings, however, there is much which is redundant or repetitive. The quality is variable, with some excellent chapters, for example on neuropathological and electrophysiological aspects, and some which are both weak and uncritical. The book is also notably poorly produced (even for a camera ready text), with mixtures of type faces, styles and formats; this does no justice to the editors or the authors, and is an abrogation of a publishers' art. This is for the shelves of an epilepsy specialist only, and one prepared to overlook the poor production quality.

SIMON SHORVON

**Diagnostic Manual of Tumours of the Central Nervous System.** By Anthony J Franks. (Pp 142; £45.00.) Edinburgh: Churchill Livingstone, 1988.

Of the florid production of neurological books we see nowadays, a large part is taken

by those dealing with tumours of the nervous system. Dr Franks' effort *Diagnostic Manual of Tumours of the Central Nervous System* comes now into such a rich field and obviously will not avoid being compared with other, often highly valuable, publication on the same subject.

The book has been planned rather traditionally with an introductory chapter on techniques of preparation and staining of the tissues. Artefacts are common events when fresh preparations are used for diagnostic purposes and the author describes and illustrates them comparing the advantages and pitfalls of smears and frozen sections.

The tumours are subsequently presented according to the classical sequence; gliomas first, followed by the various meningeal tumours, primitive neuroectodermal and neuronal neoplasms, nerve sheath, reticular, vascular, pituitary, pineal, germ cell tumours. The last chapters describe epithelial tumours and maldevelopmental lesions, paraganglioma, chordoma and metastases. Each chapter consists of a standard description of the main morphological features of the various neoplasms accompanied by numerous good quality illustrations. In some cases, the reader has the chance of comparing the appearances of the same lesion in smear, frozen and paraffin preparations.

Having briefly described the layout of this book, it is less easy to comment on what useful and original information it has to offer to the readers that does not already exist in other publications. Since the manual was designed, in the words of the author, "to provide a practical bench manual for use by trainees... and experienced pathologists...", I could find very little that could help in everyday diagnosis, in addition to standard descriptions and pictures. Nor does the recurring statement that "further sampling" be done help very much; while every pathologist is aware of the fact that more sections should be examined in order to make the best possible diagnosis, the present neurosurgical trend is towards performing more and more CT directed needle biopsies which give the pathologist very little tissue. Unfortunately, I could not see any comment on this subject.

Furthermore, I would have liked some more display of immunohistochemical expertise by a pathologist who has done a lot in this field; GFAP is frequently mentioned but other important markers are not sufficiently dealt with in the differential diagnosis; yet most laboratories have access to antibodies and some directive on the subject could have certainly helped to avoid misuse

and misinterpretations.

In conclusion, a rather conventional book which can offer limited help to everyday neuropathological work. This, the few inaccuracies and the relatively high price are the main liabilities which are only marginally offset by a succinct text and nice pictures.

F SCARAVILLI

**Evoked Potentials III: The Third International Evoked Potentials Symposium.** Edited by C Barber, TBlum. (Pp 487; £108.00.) Guildford: Butterworth Scientific, 1988.

This well-produced volume contains selected papers from the Evoked Potentials Symposium which was held in West Berlin in late 1986. The most important and useful part of the book is the first section, termed Background and Perspective. This contains eight review articles by invited participants, and all are well worth attention from anyone with more than a passing interest in clinical neurophysiology. A clear summary of near- and far-field potentials and the junctional potential by Kimura is followed by an idiosyncratic but enjoyable overview of auditory evoked potentials by Jewett, and then by Bodis-Wollner's paper on the up and coming N70 component of the VEP. Mauguier's chapter on upper limb SEPs and the possible role of mapping is characteristically clear and thorough, and as usual induces feelings of guilt and resolutions about trying harder with non-cephalic references. Would that one had the time and the technicians for what is now routine in Lyons, but two runs of two thousand averages per side makes it a lengthy business. Event related potentials are reviewed, in as much as such a confusing mass of data can be briefly reviewed, by McCallum, and Allison summarises current views of aging and maturation of EPs, both short- and long-latency. Lehmann assesses EP mapping, with some comments on analysis thereof, and finally Kaufman and Williamson review some recent developments in the emerging field of magnetoencephalography, as applied to evoked potentials.

The rest of the volume comprises 60 papers chosen from those submitted and presented at the Symposium. There is the traditional section for each of: AEPs, VEPs, SEP, Cognitive Function and Multimodal studies, as well as five papers on the relatively new field of motor evoked potentials. Many of these papers, perhaps the VEP section in