The epidemiology of cerebral palsy from Sweden is comprehensive and covers the period 1959–1981. The conclusion is that there has been a dramatic increase in children treated with respirators, the majority of whom were children appropriate for gestational age and weighing more than 1,500 g. Over the period of study there had been a decreasing perinatal mortality and stillbirth rate but this had been accomplished by an increase of survivors with cerebral palsy although this was offset by a net gain of a substantial number of healthy surviving infants.

The Brussels workers give an excellent account of a multicentre European study of the pathology of prenatal encephalopathies and categorise aetiological factors into disturbances of neuronal-glial production, disturbances of neuronal migration and impairment of cerebral perfusion and hypoxia.

The final chapters cover the early identification of learning disabilities or developmental disorders. Attention deficit disorders and hyperkinesis are discussed in detail, reflecting that over 10% in North America are considered to have this disorder unlike in Britain where it is diagnosed in probably less than 1% of children. Drug therapies and various controversial treatments used in these children are discussed and the plea made that these disorders are complex and rarely have simple solutions, that strict experimental designs to test new therapies are imperative if the results are to be meaningful. The final chapter by Kinsbourne is a detailed overview of the various neurological theories of dyslexia.

As the book covers so many topics, their coverage is usually brief and superficial though some are excellent reviews and will be of interest to many. The book should mainly be of interest to those wishing to gain an insight into progress in varying aspects of paediatric neurology rather than as a reference book.

M J NORONHA


The student of psychiatry today has to steer a careful course between the equally perilous rocks of brainless and mindless psychiatry. In the United Kingdom a more phenomenologically based psychiatry has always kept a foothold in neurology and allied sciences, whilst fashion and historical accident have determined, until recently, the strong psychoanalytical flavour of transatlantic psychiatry. Thus in the last few years, when a change in direction became necessary as a consequence of the advances in the neurosciences, our American counterparts had to face a greater challenge which they met with their customary enthusiasm. This book needs to be seen in this context, as a correction of brainless psychiatry. Its theme is the integration and recognition of structural and physiological substrates relevant in determining alterations of behaviour, mood and thought. Behavioural neurology, anatomy and neuropsychology are some of the bricks psychiatrists need to build this new and durable edifice.

Except for Trimble's historical account of the changing relationship between neurology and psychiatry, this is an American book. Its size precludes a comprehensive coverage of the subject and it is best seen as a mixture of reviews of current topics (for example AIDS, PET scanning) and chapters where research strategies are discussed for their potential value to psychiatry rather than for their past contributions (for example the anatomical evolution of neural networks subserving language). The list of contributors is impressive, but includes few psychiatrists and this results in the brain/mind interactions getting occasionally out of focus. Their approach to the task in hand is varied. Some, like Nauta (the role of the corpus striatum), Mazzotta (PET), Alexander (head injuries), Starkstein et al (stroke), Levy et al (AIDS), provide comprehensive scholarly reviews, while others take the opportunity to recount their own research or to expound their theories. In the latter category are the contributions of Sacks on Gilles de la Tourette syndrome, Stevens on schizophrenia, Kiernan on neuropsychology and Benson and Stuss on frontal lobe function.

I found the book useful and easy to read and I was interested in its transcultural aspects. Those looking for a glimpse of current thinking in American behavioural neurology/biological psychiatry will share this view. Those looking for a more extensive coverage of the subject will need to fill in the gaps.

M A RON


This is an excellent book. Its success lies in clear definition and perfect execution of its aim. The authors, both experienced neuropathologists, have set out to provide a practical manual (the subtitle of the book) for trainee neuropathologists and general pathologists with an interest in the subject. In doing so they have produced a book which will appeal to a much wider readership and no doubt will also find its way to the bookshelves of neuropathologists who have long completed their training and of clinical and basic neuroscientists who treat and investigate diseases of the nervous system.

Whilst the book's approach is practical and the text predominantly descriptive, the authors also discuss theoretical considerations and basic pathological mechanisms. This approach results in an immensely readable text which conveys both the complexity and attraction of neuropathology.

The text is not comprehensive, but covers most disease entities in a concise, illuminating and systematic fashion. The first four chapters on necropsy, cut-up, histology and biopsies are entirely practical and give many useful hints to the examination of the nervous system. One of the best examples of such practical notes is to be found at the conclusion of the chapter on histology. The authors not only list non-specific changes and artefacts, but also give practical advice on the use of the microscope and warn of the pitfalls of the much abused term "slightly loss". The first two chapters could also serve as an atlas to neuro-anatomy and an aide-memoire to what they got at that. While the emphasis is on more common conditions, rare neurodegenerative, metabolic, nutritional and malformative disorders are also reviewed.

The style is most appealing: clear, instructive, but not patronising. The authors often ask questions which they do not always answer themselves. As indeed so many of the afflictions of the nervous system are of unknown aetiology or pathogenesis, they induce the readers to think about these problems. The text is complemented by an abundant illustrations of consistently high standard.

I can recommend this book most warmly and without hesitation. The authors have clearly fulfilled their original aim of producing an excellent practical manual. But more importantly, they have also succeeded in presenting neuropathology which has become a fast developing, fascinating and challenging area of neuroscience.

PL LANTOS