

into English, but certainly careful proof reading with this in mind would improve the second edition.

Altogether this is an enjoyable book which would be a valuable addition to the library of any neurosurgical unit. It may be read with interest by all aneurysm surgeons and the young will find it of particular value in highlighting points of risk and difficulty which the authors have been careful to document.

LINDSAY SYMON

**Colour Atlas of Micro-Oto-Neurosurgical Procedures.** By VITTORIO COLLETTI AND JAMES E. BENECKE JR. (Pp 112; Price: DM160.00). Heidelberg: Springer-Verlag.

It is nearly 20 years since I first visited Dr. William House in Los Angeles to see his technique of temporal bone surgery. I was amazed by the way in which with drill in one hand and sucker in the other, the mastoid was opened, the bony labyrinth removed and the internal auditory meatus displayed, and all this within one hour. In the introduction to this book, Dr. House tells us how this was learnt in the morgue of the Los Angeles County Museum at nights and weekends with his wife, a Registered Nurse, acting as assistant. He describes how his surgical techniques were developed in this way in response to the changing demands of his clinical practice. A classical learning of surgical craft on the cadaver before the living patient was approached.

After the extensive introduction, the book is somewhat of a disappointment. Multiple procedures are described and illustrated, but all are performed on fixed cadavers, which do not have the true appearance of living tissue. In the neck dissections the fixed tissues all look much the same and the absence of much in the way of markers makes identification of the structures almost impossible. The book is probably most useful as a guide in temporal bone dissection, but its value in this would be greatly increased if the text and the pictures had been placed together. As it is the paragraphs of text with alphabetical identification sometimes cannot be related to the numerically identified illustrations. Putting text and pictures together, providing orientation, and marking the important structures would greatly improve this book as a guide to dissection. There are descriptions of operations for acoustic neuroma, microvascular decompression and glomus tumour but no operative illustrations of these procedures. Despite these failings, the book is useful in indicating the range of approaches now available and should encourage more interdisciplinary collaboration between Otolologists and Neurosurgeons in this interesting and developing area.

RD ILLINGWORTH

**Neurobiology of Panic Disorder Frontiers of Clinical Neuroscience Series.** Vol. 8. By J C BALLENGER. (Pp 391; Price: \$96.00). 1990. ISBN 0-471-56210-6.

Panic disorder, indeed the very existence of such a condition, has become one of the most contentious topics in psychiatry. The concept

has been officially codified in the American diagnostic system, the DSM, and the International Classification of Diseases will follow suit. The separation of a diagnostic category within the broader group of anxiety disorders followed observations that some forms of these disorders responded to treatment with drugs conventionally described as antidepressants. The original observation is generally attributed to DF Klein although priority of publication must go to West and Dally who recorded their observation with iproniazid. It may be argued that the experience of panic attacks is a necessary clinical feature for response of an anxiety disorder to antidepressant drugs. It may also be disputed, and certainly is, that panic attacks have origin in primary neurological disturbance but the weight of evidence is for a neurobiological disturbance probably related to the type of primary depressive disorder which psychiatrists have less difficulty in accepting as a basically somatic disorder.

The dispute has been productive and a large amount of research has been stimulated. The study of the biological basis of panic disorder is leading to a more balanced consideration of the mind-body equation and of physical as well as psychological processes in the genesis of anxiety states and other states conventionally categorised as "neurotic" disorders.

The present book is a good summary of research on panic disorder as a somatic disorder. It is not complete for it is to be followed by a second volume which will present the clinical aspects. It is a worthwhile collection of contributions by a large number of authors; that the authors are mostly from the USA is no surprise for it is in that country that most of the biological research has been conducted.

The editor has succeeded admirably in the task of culling contributions from a large number of centres, covering animal models, genetics, childhood observations, brain mechanisms and challenge strategies, diagnostic differentiation, immunology, sleep abnormalities and brain imaging studies. Much of the material has been especially written although some has been a reprinting of previous published studies. Some authors summarise studies in a useful way whilst others present new findings apparently for the first time. Some of the work is not directly concerned with Panic Disorder but all is relevant to the topic of the neurobiology of anxiety. One of the two British contributions, from Sandler's laboratory, presents the little known work on the endogenous MAOI, Tribulin.

Perhaps the most fascinating area of study is the neuro-anatomical work based on brain imaging techniques and cerebral blood flow studies and this area is particularly well represented with high quality colour illustrative material. Reiman is still the only source of information concerning PET and Panic Disorder but he presented the work up to the latest published study in 1990. The book is a mine of useful information for the researchers. Clinicians may prefer to await the succeeding volume.

RP SNAITH

**Management of Posttraumatic Spinal Instability: Neurosurgical Topics Series.** Edited by P R COOPER. (Pp 213; Price: Members \$70, Non-members \$80, includes

\$10 for postage and handling outside US and Canada only.) 1990. Chicago: American Assoc. of Neurological Surgeons. ISBN 0-9624246-2-5.

This volume is to be welcomed both on its own account and also as the first in a series of monographs commissioned by the American Association of Neurological Surgeons in the series Neurosurgical Topics. Edited by Paul Cooper MD, Associate Professor of Neurosurgery at New York University Medical Center it contains contributions from a number of distinguished authors both from the fields of Neurosurgery and of Orthopaedics.

Both the conservative and surgical management of spinal trauma are discussed clearly and in great detail: each section contains multiple references to the English literature up to 1988. The technical notes on spinal instrumentation are excellent and very well illustrated. The production of the book and in particular the reproduction of the scans and x-rays was of a very high order.

This volume is reasonably priced and highly recommended: it should find a place in every neurosurgical library. Further monographs in this series are eagerly awaited.

AE BOOTH

**The Blood-Brain Barrier, Amino Acids and Peptides.** By M B SEGAL AND B V ZLOKOVIC. (Pp 201; Price: UK£39.95; US\$62.00; Dfl. 155.00). 1990. Dordrecht, Kluwer Academic Publishers Group. ISBN 0-746-20122-2.

This timely monograph deals primarily with neuropeptides, their function, distribution, metabolism and transport, and it is in this area that it makes its most important contributions. The discussion of the blood brain barrier and amino acids is adequate but the treatment of peptides is excellent. The discovery of new neuropeptides and new locations and functions for those that are already known has occurred so rapidly that it is almost impossible to get an overview of the field. These important compounds have an enormous variety of functions and operate in both neural and non-neural systems. Many have been discovered in organs other than the brain and then found to be present in the central or peripheral nervous system. Known functions vary from modulation of neurotransmission and regulation of hormonal secretion to immunomodulation, inflammatory effects and effects on intestinal motility. Since the field is in such rapid evolution and the research involves so many different disciplines, it has been very difficult to get an overview.

The treatment of neuropeptides is surprisingly comprehensive for such a compact volume. Extremely well referenced, it contains a wealth of information. Unfortunately, the field of neuropeptides is so varied and in such an early stage of development that it consists of a large number of unrelated and loosely related bits and pieces of information that do not fit into any coherent pattern. As a result, readability suffers somewhat. There is, as yet, no good unifying theory or set of systematic relationships that will allow one to make sense of the field. Indeed, it may be that the field will prove so chaotic that no systematic theory is possible. Nevertheless, this volume brings together most of what is