

seems naturally to open at the book review page. Clearly this is the most popular section of the journal and members turn to this section for entertainment and guidance on whether to spend our own (or the department's) money on buying a given book. This particular book was the result of a symposium on stroke prevention held in April 1992 and the text, whilst entertaining in places, is ageing rapidly. For example, the chapter on the role of anticoagulants in stroke prevention in patients with atrial fibrillation was written before the results of the European Atrial Fibrillation Trial came out. This study is the only one which addresses the issue of whether patients with a recent ischaemic stroke or a transient ischaemic attack in atrial fibrillation should be given anticoagulants or not. There is a brief chapter by Kaps on ultrasonic methods to detect emboli, but the area has seen an enormous amount of work published on this topic since 1992 and the chapter is not as useful as it might have been. The British consumer magazine "Which", in describing different products, puts a red star with "this month's best buy" beside it.

Verdict: Not this month's "best buy" (but the chapters on carotid endarterectomy and carotid angioplasty are good).

PETER SANDERCOCK

An Introduction to Progressive Supranuclear Palsy. Edited by: A BRUSA, P F PELOSO. Publisher: John Libbey CIC, Rome 1993. (Pp 125. £30.00.) ISBN 0-86196-443-8.

As a young neurologist in Genoa, Professor Brusa, the senior author of this monograph, became fascinated by the strange case of an elderly man affected with a progressive and apparently previously undescribed neurodegenerative disorder, which he published in *Revue Neurologique* in 1961. Brusa had scoured the available literature for comparable cases and when in 1963 the late Clifford Richardson reported the clinico-pathological findings of nine similar cases, Brusa's conviction that one was dealing with a discrete disease entity, were vindicated. Brusa has remained faithful to the cause and has diligently followed and contributed to the rapidly expanding literature on a disorder which is still considered by most neurologists to be a rarity, and which rivals motor neurone disease as one of the most distressing neurodegenerations encountered in clinical practice.

The authors of this slim monograph are right to state in their concluding remarks, that in its fully established form the disease first reported by Steele Richardson and Olszewski is one of the most distinctive and easily recognisable conditions in clinical practice. However, even when the presentation is classical encompassing all the cardinal features, occasional surprises may occur at postmortem. Furthermore, unusual and atypical clinical presentations are now increasingly recognised, in particular a malignant and relentlessly progressive bradykinetic syndrome, which responds poorly or not at all to L-Dopa. The pathognomonic severe supranuclear vertical palsy

is also frequently absent throughout the whole course of the illness and there is also now a greater recognition of the frequent occurrence of tonic inhibition of levator palpebrae (apraxia of eyelid opening), and cognitive dysfunction of frontal lobe type. Even at postmortem life has become more difficult as the histopathological abnormalities if taken in isolation and without clinical documentation, may at times be indistinguishable from post encephalitic Parkinson's syndrome and lytico-Bodig disease of Guam, even when ultra structural studies on the tangles are carried out.

This book has a superb bibliography of 800 references and I suspect that this will be the part of the monograph which is most useful to neurologists interested in the field. The chapters are at times almost telegrammatic and the book is really a collection of notes. For those interested in getting an overview of current research into Steele-Richardson-Olszewski disease, I would express a preference for either Litvan and Agid's book or that of Tolosa. Nevertheless, for those involved in research into this tragically incurable condition, Professor Brusa's book comes as a welcome additional contribution to the literature from a respected pioneer in the field.

ANDREW LEES

Intellectual Functions and the Brain—An Historical Perspective. By Hans J Markowitsch. (Pp 182 £78.00.) Published by Hogrefe and Huber, Kirkland, USA 1992. ISBN 0-88937-081-8.

Written by an eminent neuropsychologist, this review portrays the dawning between 1870 and 1939 of what is now known as neuropsychology. Given the author's interests, memory and frontal function are given greatest coverage.

The initial chapter relates studies linking brain morphology to intellectual capacity. Such studies are never far from the stench of eugenics. Spitzka's assertion in 1907 that "the brain of a first-class genius . . . is as far removed from that of the savage bushman as that of the latter from the brain of the nearest related ape" is sadly typical.

The path to unravel the mystery of the frontal lobes is well covered. The initial somewhat euphoric claims made for frontal lobe psychosurgery are reported, such as the politically incorrect "excellent adjustment as housewife". Some, however, will sympathise with the statement that psychosurgery is "an excellent technique for treatment of selected cases from private practice".

The bulk of the text concerns memory and its disorders, and is excellent. The focus is mainly on Korsakoff's syndrome, as the crucial role of medial temporal structures in memory was less appreciated at that time.

The persistent impression given by this book is that knowledge is constantly discovered, forgotten and rediscovered. Scoville's surprise in 1954 at bilateral amygdalohippocampal resection causing dense amnesia might have been lessened had he read Bechterew's 1900 report of amnesia due to bilateral hippocampal destruction. Even "false memories" were first described in 1887.

This is a definitive account of neuropsychological research in the chosen period. It is exhaustively referenced, but the lack of an index is a surprising failing. Although its price will dissuade all but the enthusiast, it is likely to prove popular with libraries for the history of medicine.

JOHN GREENE

The Neuropsychology of Mental Disorders. A Practical Guide. Edited by LEONARD F KOZIOL and CHRIS E STOUT. (Pp 326; \$64.75.) Published by Charles C Thomas, Illinois 1994. ISBN 0-398-05905-5.

This book claims to describe recent developments in the neurosciences as they apply to understanding the problems raised by mental disorder. The term "neuropsychology" in the title is misleading in that the subject matter lies at least as much in neuropsychiatry as neuropsychology, with some neurology and bits of neuroradiology thrown in for good measure. Following an initial chapter providing a Cook's tour of some aspects of neuropsychology, the majority of the chapters cover neuropsychological/neuropsychiatric aspects of such things as schizophrenia, mood disorders, substance abuse, post-traumatic stress disorder and forensic psychiatry. These contributions all too often attempt to cover large and complex areas in relatively few pages with the result that the accounts are typically sketchy, sometimes selective in idiosyncratic ways and occasionally misleading. Despite the three words of the title: "A Practical Guide", the book is not strong on "practical advice" and some of the advice that is offered is positively erroneous. For example, "rare causes of Huntington's chorea include hyperthyroidism, use of birth control pills and pregnancy".

Despite the avowed aims, the relevance of the neurosciences to the understanding and management of mental disorders is not advanced by this offering which is clearly something that both personal bookshelves and hospital libraries can survive very well without.

E MILLER

Pediatric Neurosurgery. Third Edition. Edited by William Cheek, Arthur Marlin, David McLone, Donald Reigel, Marion Walker. (Pp 630, £146.00.) Published by W B Saunders Company, London 1994. ISBN 0-7216-3767-1.

The third edition of this popular volume, first published in 1982, has been compiled under the auspices of the Pediatric Section of the American Association of Neurological Surgeons and the American Society of Pediatric Neurosurgeons. As such, it provides an entirely North American perspective to the diagnosis and treatment of a wide spectrum of diseases of the paediatric nervous system.