sitivity is well presented and informative. The list of references covers just over 24 pages with a subject-index of six pages.

G PAMPIGLIONE

Problems of Aphasia Edited by Y Lebrun and R Hoops (pp 198; 65 Dutch guilders) Lisse, The Netherlands: Swets & Zeitlinger, 1979.

This book contains seven articles on topics related to aphasia. For various reasons it is a very disappointing collection. The articles are neither related to each other nor do they cover the field at all adequately. The major central issues in aphasia—the viability of the classical taxonomy based on Broca's, Wernicke's and conduction aphasia and the functional origins of the disorders so described—are never discussed. In addition the papers tend to be based on sketchy case reports, and are not well situated in modern linguistics or cognitive psychology.

The most interesting paper is a lengthy analysis by Leonard of ideokinetic aphasia and its relation to other disorders, particularly ideokinetic apraxia. Other topics discussed include alexia without agraphia, delayed auditory feedback, pantomime, prosody, acalculia and the linguistic functions of the right hemisphere.

T SHALLICE

Stereotactic Cerebral Irradiation By G Szikla (pp 340; \$48.75) Amsterdam: Elsevier, 1979.

For many years the stereotactic method has allowed an accurate and relatively safe approach to the problems presented by those pathological processes, mostly new growth, deemed inoperable and involving vital and otherwise inaccessible areas of the brain. The method has been used to guide the biopsy needle, and so help delineate the lesion, and to direct therapeutic radiation from an external or implanted source.

The advent of computed tomography with its possibilities for earlier recognition of even smaller pathological targets has given fresh impetus to the study of these techniques. To provide a meeting point for all the various disciplines involved, a symposium devoted to stereotactic cerebral irradiation was held in Paris in July 1979, and the proceedings are recorded in this well produced and well illustrated volume.

Many of the communications concern basic aspects of the methods and their application—the precise measurement of the target volume, the different radio-surgical techniques and their application, the early and late effects of local irradiation. There is a summary of current techniques and a commentary on present problems of dosage specification and other technical matters.

The section devoted to indications and results makes it clear that tumours, both benign and malignant, remain the principal indication for treatment. Some encouraging preliminary results are reported with benign and circumscribed tumours, notably craniopharyngioma and acoustic neuroma. By gamma irradiation it has proved possible to halt growth of tumour and probably to cause its replacement by scar tissue. It is with pituitary tumours, both secreting and non-active alike, where the greatest enthusiasm is evident; where future possibilities seem brightest, despite the established position of present micro-surgical methods. The successful selective blockade of growth hormone secretion from the pituitary gland in patients with acromegaly and diabetic retinopathy is particularly significant for the absence of complications. The problem of the invasive glioma clearly remains intractable, despite all the ingenuity of the therapists.

For those who are involved in stereotactic radiation therapy or who are merely interested in recent developments this volume provides a valuable insight to current work and thought and is an excellent source of reference.

JJ MACCABE

Delirium By Z J Lipowski (pp 567; \$39.75) Springfield Illinois: Charles C. Thomas, 1980.

The author tells us that this is the first monograph on delirium to be published in English. It will prove an invaluable work of reference and the early chapters, at least, can be read with pleasure. The history of the concept, the detailed clinical features, the aetiology and pathogenesis, the diagnosis and the management of delirium are all covered in great detail in the early chapters, in each case with an exhaustive survey of the literature, from the present day to classical times. The general argument of the book is that

all forms of clouding of consciousness (or of disturbance of wakefulness, hyperactive and hypoactive) stem from the same basic disorder and should be subsumed under the category of delirium, while earlier authors often confined the term delirium to hyperactive states.

The later chapters consider all the possible causes of delirium, and also consider delirium in special settings (the puerperium, surgery, old age). The main use of these chapters is as a source of references to the literature.

The book is long and sometimes repetitive, but it is a unique work and can be warmly recommended. It will be of interest to all practising clinicians including, of course, neurologists and psychiatrists.

JL GIBBONS

Frontiers in Neuroendocrinology, vol 6. Edited by L Martini and WF Ganong (pp 428; \$53.72) New York: Raven Press, 1980.

The latest volume of *Frontiers in Neuroendocrinology* provides an interesting addition to the series. Dealing largely with the isolation, synthesis and characterisation of various hormones it carries throughout an important message. Namely, that many of these hormones occur simultaneously in a number of organs. In particular the occurrence of practically all pituitary hormones within the brain as well as in the pituitary gland is emphasised. Indeed, local synthesis may well occur within the brain. So-called growth hormone in the amygdala is compelling evidence of this. An interesting chapter on peptides common to the gut and brain continues this theme showing that a number of peptides such as cholecystokinin and vaso-active intestinal polypeptide, first isolated from the gastro-intestinal tract, are now known to occur within the brain. I particularly enjoyed the chapter dealing with neurotensin, another peptide widely distributed throughout the central nervous system and also found in high concentrations in portions of the gastro-intestinal tract. The relationship between hormone-containing neuronal systems and catecholamine containing neurones is also examined in this volume. It has been demonstrated