Diagnostic Picture Tests in Clinical Neurology. By M Parsons. (Pp 127; £6.50.) London: Wolfe Medical Publications Ltd, 1987.

The author describes this as an aid to those preparing for examinations (particularly MB and MRCP) enabling them to test their neurological skill. It comprises a series of 200 pictures—101 colour photographs, 43 radiographs and 25 CT scans. Following the pictures there are two or three succinct questions and brief answers are given separately.

In my view the author succeeds well in his aim and this work may help students in their understanding of neurology, although this must be considered as a supplement to appropriate reading, clinical examination and bedside teaching. My criticisms are minor. Inevitably a few pictures reproduce poorly, particularly those showing radiographs, such as 46, 54, 78 and 106, although often the questions point to the answer. It is always difficult to demonstrate ocular motility disorders in static pictures and some details of such disturbances are lost by this. Part of the answer to problem 79 is missing.

This work is likely to be popular for its selected readers and I can recommend it to them. Furthermore it is modestly priced and produced as a slim paperback which will fit into the pocket.

T FOWLER

Disorders of the Developing CNS. Edited by Harold J Hoffman and Fred Epstein. (Pp 840; £105.00.) Oxford: Blackwell Scientific, 1986.

The outstanding and welcome feature of this book is that it brings together many topics of clinical importance in one volume, previously described in different text books. Congenital abnormalities and especially those of the central nervous system, are a major cause of mortality and morbidity in children. The authors have collected appropriate multi-disciplinary and expert contributors to provide a most comprehensive text of these conditions.

The basic sciences of embryology, genetics, physiology and pathology are especially well covered, in addition to radiological investigation, medical and surgical management. The illustrations are excellent with clear diagrams, good pathological and clinical photographs and up to date radiology including ultrasound, CT and MR scanning. A very adequate bibliography is also included.

This book is of special value to paediatricians, radiologists, neuropathologists, neurologists and neurosurgeons, whether established or in training. It provides a valuable reference for every day practice as well as in teaching preparation. It is also useful reading for those in allied fields, who may have to deal with some of the effects of these disorders including for example, orthopaedic, plastic and urological surgeons.

Despite its price, I cannot recommend this book strongly enough for neurologists and neurosurgeons with a substantive paediatric practice who should obtain a personal copy. It should find a place in medical school, children's hospitals and departmental libraries.

AD HOCKLEY

Modern Concepts in Neurotraumatology. (*Acta Neurochirurgica/Supplementum 36.*) Edited by S Lindgren. (Pp 159; DM170.00.), 1986.

There are too many bad books being published. This is an example of one. It has a weighty and inviting title, but is merely the proceedings of a symposium on neurotraumatology and rather a poor one at that. Publishers should be honest with titles.

The symposium, held in Sweden, had the usual luminaries contributing. The book is a collection of their papers, presumably in abbreviated form, many of which have been heard before. Although some of these are worthwhile, the one on the Experimental Models of Head Injury being an example, the majority are barely worth reading. The papers on practical management are superficial and of little value.

I find it difficult to say much good about this book. Perhaps it would have been better had it not been published.

S GALBRAITH

Amphetamines and pH-Shift Agents for Brain Imaging: Basic Research and Clinical Results. Edited by HJ Biersack and C Winkler. (Pp 186; £55.50.) New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1986.

This book contains the papers presented at the symposium of the Rhineland-Westphalian Society of Nuclear Medicine held in Bonn, West-Germany, in October 1984. The idea of the symposium and the book was to summarise the achievements obtained during

the first few years of applying SPECT (single photon emission computerised tomography) scanning techniques using radio-labelled amphetamines and related compounds.

The first 11 papers are dedicated to basic research topics. Four north American and seven European groups present their data. The last seven papers are all from central European groups and deal with clinical results.

The character of the book inevitably results in much variability of quality of the papers and a lack of balance between the topics. Also difficult to avoid are the many repetitions which occur in introductions, descriptions of methods and discussions. The book itself is well produced but the price is very high considering the small volume and its limitations.

Most of the papers in the first section discuss the radiolabelling of the various derivatives of amphetamines (mainly ^{123}I IMP) their production, uptake mechanisms, bio-distribution tissue kinetics and metabolism. The short but good paper by Baldwin and colleagues discusses the possible mechanisms of retention of the amphetamines. They show that the "pH shift" mechanism cannot be responsible for the retention of this class of tracer in the brain. Since ^{123}I HIPDM and ^{201}Tl DDC are dealt with only briefly without firm knowledge of their respective retention mechanisms, the title of the book seems not quite appropriate. A good short review of IMP uptake in human brain is given by Bischof-Delaloye and Delaloye. These authors conclude that "even if IMP is distributed to and within the brain according to blood flow there is no doubt that other phenomena than flow and probably also other labelled compounds than IMP itself (metabolites) play a role in the final scintigraphic appearance of the brain". Neirinckx and colleagues provide a good review of the requirements of SPECT tracer compounds discussing blood-brain barrier passage and brain trapping mechanisms. They describe in more detail ^{99m}Tc labelled analogues of PAO. Knapp and Srivastava outline new approaches for the development of "imaging" agents to be used in SPECT scanning. The last two papers of the first section deal with the instrumental problems inherent in SPECT cameras. A good comparison is given between rotating gamma cameras and multi detector scanners. Also the influence of several types of collimation on the quality of data collection is nicely discussed.

The second (clinical) section is not quite convincing. It is several times stated that