Book reviews

the pial vessels, the development of brain "oedema", and changes in the intracranial and cerebral venous pressures during acute hypertension. Dr Auer, in common with other workers, found that severe induced hypertension causes cerebral arteriolar dilation, an increase in cerebral blood flow and dysfunction of the blood-brain barrier. There is, therefore, increasing, if not conclusive, evidence that forced dilatation and over-distension of the cerebral resistance vessels and cerebral "oedema" formation are the pathophysiological basis of hypertensive encephalopathy.

This treatise contains a useful and informative account of the past and present knowledge in this field, and summarises that clinical significance of the experimental results at the end. It is well illustrated with some coloured figures and cites most of the relevant literature. This book is highly recommended to those with an interest in the microcirculation of the brain.

D. I. GRAHAM

Regional Cerebral Blood Flow By H. J. Gelmers. (Pp. 96; illustrated; Dfl 60.00.) Van Gorcum: Assen. 1978.

This volume has all the marks of a published thesis. It deals principally with the author's experience of measurement of cerebral blood flow in 64 patients using the methods developed by Lassen and his colleagues in Copenhagen—that is, a multichannel system for extracranial detection of gamma radiation after intracarotid injection of xenon. The book is sadly out of date—for instance, there are only a handful of references dating after 1975. It might be of mild interest to those using similar methods, but the original papers by Lassen's group and by many other groups would be far more valuable and comprehensive. Unfortunately, there is little of scientific interest or clinical value to either the general reader or the expert in the cerebral circulation.

A. MURRAY HARPER

Sleep Disorders. Diagnosis and Treatment Edited by Robert Williams and Ismet Karacan. (Pp. 417; illustrated; £22.50.) John Wiley and Sons: Chichester. 1978.

This American volume is essentially a "state of the art" review of a number of sleep problems mainly from the point of view of clinicians involved in sleep research. The authors are in the main very eminent in the areas they have chosen to review, and overall it is a credit to the editors that the style is so harmonious although there are surprising omissions in some areas.

The book is divided into three parts:

1. primary disorders consisting of insomnia, narcolepsy, and sleep apnoea syndromes; 2. secondary sleep disorders—in depressive illnesses and major psychoses including organic brain disease and in most medical and surgical conditions; 3. the use of the sleep laboratory in the investigation and treatment of impotence.

Inevitably, there is a great variability in the quality of the available data leading to some very full review chapters while other chapters consist of limited and recent experiments. However, it is a credit to the authors that the experimental data are explicitly stated so that generalisations are largely avoided. The main effect I found was a feeling of dissatisfaction with the apparent gaps in many areas but this is in its way a stimulant to research. In other ways the book presents a coming of age of sleep research confirming that there are now sufficient basic data on normal sleep to allow research to move towards the clinical fields increasingly. After all many of our patients die in their sleep!

I was particularly pleased to see a chapter discussing the behavioural approach in the treatment of insomnia which, if sufficiently successful on a large scale, would allow alternatives to hypnosis.

The main snag in the volume is its cost which I think will prevent many individuals from using the book to advantage, but I must commend it to all interested readers.

J. I. EVANS


This book contains papers given at the first international conference on Tay-Sachs Disease which was held in 1975, together with the discussions printed verbatim. In scope it ranges from the biochemistry and molecular biology to the religious significance particularly to the Jewish Community. The main emphasis is on the practicalities of heterozygote detection, antenatal diagnosis, and the impact of such programmes on communities and individual families. Experience is related from the United States, Canada, Israel, the UK, and South Africa. The book contains suf-
Regional Cerebral Blood Flow

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