tracing different projections in animal brain. In the short introductory chapter the relationship between some central neurotransmitters and their functional role in health, disease, and drug action is discussed. Some aspects of the mechanism of neurotransmission and its modification can be studied readily in vitro. Data are presented on the release from synaptosomes of three major biogenic amines, with some of the advantages and drawbacks of the preparation. There is a critical discussion of various methods for the separation of neurones and glia from mammalian brain. Details are given of a recommended separation technique with emphasis on criteria for establishing purity and function of each cell type. Although, as indicated in another review, lithium has some value in the treatment of depressive illness the mechanism of its action is still unclear. Its direct influence on neurotransmitters is unestablished, it being more likely to influence ion transport within the CNS. Equally intriguing is the role of taurine as inhibitory neurotransmitter or modulator. There is a succinct review of this topic, including data on the metabolism of this interesting sulphur amino acid.

This book can be recommended to neurobiologists and to clinicians looking for some of the latest scientific information about centrally acting neurotransmitters.

A. N. DAVISON

Neurotransmitter Function—Basic and Clinical Aspects Edited by William S. Fields. (Pp. 394+ix; illustrated; \$24.75.) Stratton Intercontinental Medical Book Corporation: New York. 1977.

This reviewer's response to published proceedings of symposia and conferences has become increasingly jaundiced as the flow of unrefered, repetitive literature has increased exponentially in the past decade. This volume was an exception, for its 19 chapters are mostly crisp reviews of individual topics concerning neurotransmitter function. The meeting from which the book derives was held in 1976 in Houston, Texas. Some of the information is now out of date, and the impact of peptides is only just apparent in the form of a prophetic chapter by Barbeau. GABA (Peck, Curtis, Walters, and

Chase) and acetylcholine (Cooper, Tarsy, Davis Berger, and Hollister, and Drachman) hold the field, with other chapters on the fundamental basis of neurotransmitter release (Krnjevic, Pfenninger, Wood, Redburn, Bloom, and Reis) and others on the role of neurotransmitters in psychiatry (Ciarello, Berger, Mandell, and Knapp, and Reitan). Perhaps the most entertaining chapter is the delightful introduction by von Euler, which gives a brief, modest introduction to the history of the subject. A book for the specialist.

C. D. MARSDEN

Encyclopaedia of Medical Radiology Volume XIV, Part 2 Edited by L. Diethelm and S. Wende. (Pp. 668; illustrated; price not stated.) Springer-Verlag: Berlin, Heidelberg, New York. 1977.

In common with others in this series, more than one language is used. This book of 668 pages contains one chapter of 127 pages in English and the remainder in German. The former is Pneumography in Supratentorial Space-Occupying Lesions. This has been written by an author who has dedicated a great part of his scientific activity to improving the technique of encephalography. While admitting that the advent of computed tomography has reduced the necessity for this examination, reasons are given why knowledge of the technique is still necessary. The chapter contains much useful information regarding the localisation and, where possible, the nature of the lesion. The illustrations are of high quality and are well produced. It would certainly be useful as a reference for the finer points of encephalography to workers in the field but perhaps the whole book would only be valuable in a department where both English and German are spoken.

The chapters in German are the Physiology and Pathology of the CSF Circulation, Pneumography, Ventriculography with Positive Contrast Media, Myelography with Positive Contrast, and Air Myelography. All these are exceedingly comprehensive. There is also a chapter on Pneumography of Tumours of the Posterior Fossa which is not as detailed as the others but more than adequate.

P. MACPHERSON

Neuroradiology in Infants and Children Volumes 1-3 By Derek C. Harwood Nash and Charles R. Fitz. (Pp. 1227; illustrated; £132.00.) C. V. Mosby: St Louis. 1976.

The insatiable worldwide demand for neuroradiological investigations is reflected by the explosive output of articles in general radiological journals and those devoted to the neurological sciences. A number of comprehensive textbooks summarising and sharing these experiences are available, but so far the particular problems of investigation and interpretation in infants and children have only been discussed as part of these larger texts or in smaller, introductory books. Inevitably, a demand has arisen for a more authoritative guide to paediatric neuroradiology for special paediatric hospitals, large hospitals with significant paediatric departments, and the major neuroradiological centres where investigations of younger patients now represent a significant demand. This three volume work is a welcome addition to meet this need.

The volumes are based on the experience of the two authors at the Department of Neuroradiology of the Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto between 1968 and 1976. Additional contributions are made on generalised diseases of the spine, anaesthesia for neurological procedures in children, and paediatric neuronuclear medicine by the clinician involved.

The three volumes are divided into 26 chapters, the format reflecting the authors' approach to the practical solution of diagnostic problems tempered by an intellectual discipline in their logical interpretation. Five chapters describe the normal skull and spine respectively with helpful detail about the problems of the growing child. The separate fifth chapter is devoted to the petrous bone and its diseases. Seven chapters are concerned with techniques of investigation and normal appearances, including a chapter on computer tomography.

The remaining eight chapters describe the common pathological processes affecting the younger patient—namely hydrocephalus, brain neoplasms, trauma, infection, abnormalities of the cerebral arteries, intracranial cysts, congenital malformations of the brain, and lesions of the spinal canal. Within these chapters both common and rare diseases are described comprehensively.

The volumes admirably fulfil the

function as an instructional text. The systematic description of various disease processes and their interpretation is augmented by useful summary lists of particular causes. The critical choice of the method of investigation is also discussed and summarised in the light of the development of CAT scanning. The standard of radiographic reproduction is of high quality, and the list of references is extensive.

These books were a pleasure to review and amply justify the reputation of the Neuroradiological Department of the Toronto Children's Hospital. They will be a standard reference for some time, and are highly recommended as a text for students of radiology, as a stimulus and guide to general radiologists, and as essential reading for neuroradiologists, paediatric radiologists, and clinicians concerned in the investigation of disease of the nervous system in childhood.

KENNETH GROSSART

Topics in Child Neurology Edited by Michael E. Blaw, Isabelle Rapin, and Marcel Kinsbourne. (Pp. 343; illustrated; £17.50.) Spectrum Publications: New York and London. 1978.

This volume, together with *Brain Dysfunction in Infantile Febrile Convulsions* (previously reviewed in these columns), contains the major papers presented at the First International Congress of Child Neurology in Toronto in 1975. Five topics are studied in some depth, although not comprehensively.

The section on neonatal neurology includes a masterly plan for the management of suspect inherited metabolic disease of the newborn, which is true preventative neurology and invites the much wider audience of paediatricians to pay heed to it. Temporal lobe epilepsy in childhood has Dr Rasmussen and Dr Andermann from Montreal discussing the neurosurgical treatment and the selection and investigation of cases. Adjacent to this section is an all too brief chapter on the Lennox-Gastaut syndrome by Gastaut himself. The section on language and learning disabilities contains beautifully clear papers by Isabelle Rapin on language and Martha Denckla on dyslexia. I also enjoyed Maureen Dennis on hemisphere functions and the role of the corpus callosum.

The subject of hyperactivity is dealt with by several authors, and also forms the major portion of the final section. Those who get hot under the collar when arguing the pros and cons of chemotherapy and psychosurgery in childhood behaviour disorder should read the chapter on stereotaxic amygdalotomy by Narabayashi, and those on hyperactivity and behaviour-changing therapies by Marcel Kinsbourne.

After reading this book one is left with the strong feeling that although advances in the neurosciences are taking place at breathtaking speed, the needs of the child with a disordered brain are most unevenly met, and that prognosis must greatly depend on where the family happens to live.

J. B. P. STEPHENSON

The Benzodiazepines: Use, Overuse, Misuse, Abuse By John Marks. (Pp. 111; £4.95.) MTP Press: Lancaster. 1978.

This short, elegantly produced, and clearly written book is a review of the world literature on benzodiazepine abuse. Animal and human experiments together with clinical reports show that, as with most current sedatives and tranquillisers, dependence can occur if large doses are given for long periods. Clinically, benzodiazepine dependence resembles barbiturate dependence but occurs in only one in five million cases. Such cases are usually multiple drug abusers or alcoholics. Dr Marks concludes that the risk is so small that no increase in controls is necessary.

I. M. INGRAM

Psychiatric Nursing: Theory and Application Edited by L. A. Joel and D. L. Collins. (Pp. x+421; illustrated; £11.20.) McGraw-Hill: New York and London. 1978.

The role of the psychiatric nurse has been changing in recent years, with an increasing involvement of the nurse in work in the community, and with the development of an increasing range of clinical skills involving both assessment and treatment of patients and, indeed, of clients. This text, by five American

nurses (four of them holding academic appointments) sets out to provide the theoretical background as well as information for the various types of clinical practice of psychiatric nursing in the USA. It is not for the reviewer to say how useful this book will be for British nurses, but it sets out a reasonable view of the nurse's many functions, and it makes interesting reading for psychiatrists.

J. L. GIBBONS

Manual of Neurological Nursing By Nancy Swift and Robert M. Mabel. (Pp. 201; illustrated; \$7.95.) Little, Brown and Co: Boston. 1978.

This is a useful little book for nurses taking a training course in neurological or neurosurgical nursing, as a short account of the main categories of neurological disease and the observations required to be made by the nursing staff. There is less emphasis on nursing procedures, but sufficient to remind a nurse trained in general principles. The chapter on assessment of conscious level is very clear. Nurses new to neurological observation will find it helpful. The chapter on neuropsychology and habilitation offers useful advice.

P. J. NARAYAN

Year Book of Psychiatry and Applied Mental Health 1978 Edited by D. X. Freedman. (Pp. 438; £24.50.) Year Book Medical Publishers: Chicago. 1978.

The current volume of this well-known series surveys the literature on psychiatry and related disciplines up to July 1977. There is a clear summary of each paper cited, with occasional linking commentaries by a group of distinguished American psychiatrists. The coverage of general psychiatry and of child psychiatry is extensive. The same is true of psychotherapy and pharmacotherapy, but some other important topics receive only token attention. Nevertheless the book is an excellent guide to recent psychiatric literature, and it should be in every psychiatric library.

J. L. GIBBONS