An Introduction to Paediatric Neurology. By Gwilym Hosking. (Pp 252; Cloth £11.50, Paper £5.95). London: Faber & Faber 1982.

This book fills a gap which has existed of a simple account of paediatric neurology for the increasing number of non-medically qualified people who are involved in the diagnosis and management of children with neurological disorders. The reviewer felt that the reader could have been taken further into the problems of diagnosis and management of neurological disorders in simple language without the book becoming more complicated. Certain conditions such as Aicardi's syndrome and Alexander's leukodystrophy could well have been omitted and greater attention to normal variations in motor development and some more information about normal development and the deviations from normal and methods of testing would have been probably of wider interest to such an audience. In a second edition some of the pictures could be improved. The book was read by a ward sister who has recently started on a neurological ward and a therapist both of whom found it extremely helpful. A medical student on the children's firm found it too general to be of great value. The book is therefore pitched at the non medically qualified audience, fulfils a need and should probably be developed into a further edition.

BGR NEVILLE

Neuronal Aging and Its Implications in Human Neurological Pathology. World Health Organization Technical Report Series 665. Report of a WHO Study Group. (Pp 88; SFr6.) Geneva: World Health Organization, 1981.

This is a report of a WHO study group that met in Geneva between 8 and 12 December 1980. The group included eight members (and one who was not there), 14 from the Secretariat, and one Representative of International Brain Research Organization (IBRO): a galaxy of eminent experts from a variety of specialist disciplines. These reports are not signed, but this one appears to reflect well what was discussed. Dr T Lambo, Deputy Director-General of WHO opened the meeting and presumably stated the wide ranging purposes that aspects of aging and "dementia" provoke. These included reviews, formulation of new directives and strategies for studies in different cultures, and recommendation of

"appropriate action that would promote preventive measures and lead to improved care of persons with neuronal aging disorders, with particular reference to developing countries": a formidable task!

The problems covered range widely, often beyond neuronal aging. The main stream of the interest is around Alzheimer's disease. For SFr 6 the reader will find a very useful and stimulating text with a wealth of references and authoritative statements, some probably reflecting the experiences and interests of those in the study group.

It must be difficult if not impossible to co-ordinate politics, science and the aspects of medicine that bear on neuronal aging, or more specifically on intellectual deterioration (or "dementia") in the growing numbers of old people in the world. The WHO must be congratulated on its attention to the subject. This, apart from the patients, most closely concerns psychiatrists, and neuropathologists.

The conclusions and recommendations general and specific under 11 headings on just over four pages do not produce any panacea. It is good for as many readers as possible to be aware of some of the background to why "The problems of aging in the central nervous system constitute a major public health problem in every part of the world".

Some of the topics are likely to be ephemeral. Some very new recent advances like nuclear magnetic resonance are yet to show their impact. It may be confusing to link, even as a parallel, the current advances in the understanding and management of Parkinsonism with Alzheimer's changes in the dementing old; the reader will, however, find accounts of and references to the work on that front. Another rapidly expanding technique of which one is likely to hear more, is histoimmunology: it does underline the importance of interdisciplinary cooperation and coordination.

I JANOTA

Acquired Aphasia. Edited by Martha Taylor Sarno. (Pp 537; \$29.50.) New York: Academic Press, 1981.

The influential papers of Geschwind in 1965 led to a resurgence of interest in cerebral function amongst neurologists. Most of what is new in aphasiology sprang from this American revival, and a number of texts on the subject have followed in its wake. Dr Sarno's book is perhaps the most broadly

based and thorough of this group. Its aim is to provide a comprehensive and authoritative text for graduate students, clinicians and research workers without presupposing previous knowledge of aphasia, linguistics or neuro-anatomy. This is a tall order, and parts of the book would certainly be very heavy going for the complete novice whether clinician or not.

The text follows the rational classification of aphasia with its foundation in neuro-anatomy, popularised by the Boston School.

The subject is specialised and a large part of the book will not appeal to the every-day neurologist unless his interest lies in aphasiology. Even if it does, the chapters on phonological, syntactical, lexical and semantic aspects, for example, are hard work. The reason is that the book is written by psychologists and linguists as well as neurologists (22 authors in all), and accordingly only the trainee aphasiologist who wishes to grasp all aspects of his subject will make the fullest use of it. Obviously the more clinical chapters will be better received by this Journal's readership, and there are some good summaries of current knowledge in these. In addition to the titles already mentioned there are contributions on the history, anatomy and symptomatology of aphasia, and how to assess it, comprehension in aphasia, the concept of apraxia, other left hemisphere disorders, intelligence, artistry and creativity, and the special cases of aphasia in children, the elderly, the demented and the head injured subject. There is also a chapter on emotional aspects of aphasia. There is only a fairly brief contribution on the subject of therapy, the editor rightly realising that with such divergence of approach a thorough assessment might swamp the rest of the volume and render it unwieldy.

A simple work such as DF Benson's is a better introduction for the neurologist, but there is more meat and depth in Sarno's book, and more for the linguist, speech pathologist, and psychologist. It is, as the editor aims it to be, quite comprehensive, and is reasonably priced.

JC MEADOWS

Sleep: Normal and Deranged Function. Edited by HAC Kamphuisen, GW Bruyn and P Visser. (Pp 140; \$32.50.) The Netherlands; Mefar BV, 1981.

In May 1982 a two day course on sleep was held at Leiden University with the intent of