EXPLAINING THE BRAIN By W. Ritchie Russell with A. J. Dewar. (Pp. 157; illustrated; £3.25.) Oxford University Press: London. 1975.

Scientists have been criticised for a supposed failure to communicate the important implications of their specialised studies to others working in related fields or to highly educated people who would be interested in general trends but not competent to analyse detailed research reports. Professor Russell has written a useful little book for those who require to have some understanding of the function of the brain and the relevance of modern ideas to education and training of young children. The reviewer applauds his comments on this. The two chapters written in collaboration with Dr A. J. Dewar of the MRC Brain Metabolism Unit, Edinburgh, give a clear account of the 'chemistry of learning' and of the action of drugs on the brain. An idiosyncratic aspect is Professor Russell's advocacy for the existence of two separate minds in some people, one caring for monotonous, undemanding work and the other more imaginative and each with different ethical standards. As would be expected, he has interesting things to say about memory and pain. His views are already well known to neurologists but this valuable little book will stimulate many who work on the fringe of neurology. This is an enjoyable book to read.

J. A. SIMPSON

NEUROLOGICAL PATHOPHYSIOLOGY By Sven G. Eliasson, Arthur L. Prensky, and William B. Hardin Jr. (Pp. 397; illustrated; £3.) Oxford University Press: London. 1974.

Any book which sets out to describe pathological mechanisms behind clinical disorders can easily become a catalogue of hypotheses, claims, and counter claims in which the new student of neurology and the clinician may find it difficult to separate the wheat from the chaff. In the 13 chapters in this book, the authors have collated current concepts in a simple, readable, and unembellished form, leaving the reader with a clear but uncritical view of the landscape. For that reason, the academic neurologist will find it unsatisfactory and possibly naïve. It is, however, aimed primarily at the medical student and those who teach undergraduates, for whom it provides in a single, fairly small volume, information that is not available in general textbooks of neurology, and can be found only with difficulty elsewhere.

Although the book is by no means comprehensive in its coverage, it is easy to read, and for the experienced neurologist will perhaps merely serve to refresh the memory. For the medical student it will be most valuable if read in conjunction with the textbook of clinical neurology.

I consider this is a worthwhile little book which at present day prices represents good value for money.

J. P. BALLANTYNE

BRAIN SCINTIGRAPHY L. Penning and D. Front. (Pp. 284; illustrated; $61.75.) Excerpta Medica: Amsterdam. 1975.

This lucidly written and very readable book deals with the principles of interpretation of pertechnetate scintiencephalograms, and of scinticisternograms. It deals with the subjects from a clinical viewpoint and there is little discussion of apparatus or of radiopharmaceuticals.

The relevant anatomy and physiology, the effects of projection and positioning, and the normal appearances are first described. Then the various types of abnormalities which may be revealed are discussed, followed by more detailed consideration of specific lesions. In each of the latter, relevant aspects of neuropathology and pathophysiology are described, and the results of gamma encephalography are integrated with the clinical and with other neuroradiological studies, with the most important exception of computed axial tomography, which is making isotope studies redundant in many conditions. However, the values and limitations of carefully performed scanning are clearly brought out.

The illustrations of static scintiencephalograms and of sequential studies are excellent, and the detailed captions make the book a useful atlas. Unfortunately, the illustrations of some of the angiograms and plain films are not as good, but they are adequate to show the lesions being described. The illustrations are grouped at the end of each chapter, which makes them inconvenient for immediate reference at the time of reading the text. There is a useful up-to-date analysis of the literature with extensive references. The book is recommended to neuroscientists, general radiologists, and nuclear physicians interested in this field.

BRIAN KENDALL

FUNDAMENTALS OF NEUROLOGY By Ernest Gardner. (Pp. 460; illustrated; price not stated.) Saunders: London. 1975.

The title of this book is perhaps slightly misleading in that it might imply that it contained basic clinical neurological observations. In fact the book is devoted to basic anatomy and physiology of the nervous system. The coverage is very wide as indicated by 19 chapters contained within 430 pages of text. In the circumstances it is impossible to review the subject in depth, and indeed the coverage has been achieved by the presentation of data in a simple and generally uncritical manner. However, since this book is presumably directed