

Psychopathology in the Aged Edited by Jonathan O Cole and James E Barrett (pp 303; \$40.00) New York: Raven Press, 1980

This book is compiled from papers read at the Sixty-ninth Annual Meeting of the American Psychopathological Association. The papers and the subsequent discussions range from some general aspects of psychological disorders of the aged to more specific papers on psychological disturbance, depression and the treatment of dementia. Sir Martin Roth's Paul Hoch Award Lecture, is included in which senile dementia and its borderlands are reviewed in the accustomed brilliant and useful fashion. Readers of this Journal may find of interest the following papers: C E Wells on differential diagnosis, Barry Gurland's report on the use of a variety of indicators and methods in assessing the prevalence of dementia and depression, a report on the US/UK Cross-National Geriatric Community Study, a family study of Alzheimer's disease and senile dementia by L L Heston and J White which supports the view that both are the same disease with genetic links with both Down's syndrome and haematological cancers. A rather surprising investigation by Nancy E Miller found a very frequent presence of depressive mood and thought content in subjects with brain syndromes. There are also useful review papers on normal psychopathology (*sic*) of ageing and on regional blood flow patterns in the brains of elderly psychiatric patients.

F POST

The Epileptic in Home, School and Society By Stephen W Freeman (pp 263; \$14.75) Springfield: Charles C. Thomas, 1979.

The personal and social problems of the epileptic patient are all too familiar to

anyone involved in their care. So much so that many clinicians take little interest in such patients for fear of being burdened with "non-medical" aspects of their disorder. However, the medical, personal, and social aspects of epilepsy cannot be so readily separated, any more than they can with other neurological disorders. This book by an American psychologist with particular experience of developmentally disabled children attempts to answer all those questions that are raised by epileptic patients or their relatives. Prominence is given to the problems of the patient in home, school and society, as implied by the title, but he also attempts to answer questions related to the nature, cause and treatment of the disorder. The text is presented in a question and answer format. Where the answer is a matter of clinical judgement which can only be given by the responsible clinician he sensibly says so. He covers this complex field involving many different disciplines comprehensively. As the author is an American some of the answers to questions raised about epilepsy societies and legal rights will not be applicable in other countries. Nevertheless the questions asked are universal and this book can be recommended to patients, relatives and all professional workers concerned in the care of epileptic patients. For the practising physician with little knowledge of epilepsy there is also much that is of value, if only to learn the sort of questions that epileptic patients continually ask. No doubt some would disagree with a few of the answers but this should not detract from the overall value of the book. In relation to the management of behavioural problems in children the author clearly belongs to the "behavioural" school, and his final chapter is a rather over-optimistic assessment of biofeedback.

EH REYNOLDS

Recent Advances in the Diagnosis and Treatment of Pituitary Tumors edited by JA Linfoot (pp 456; \$51.68) New York: Raven Press, 1979.

The editor of this book has brought together 32 chapters contributed by an even larger number of authors. Inevitably this has led to considerable repetition. The first nine chapters deal with the basic anatomy, physiology and biochemistry of the normal pituitary gland. For one not well-versed in the abbreviations used to name the multiplicity of hypothalamic and pituitary hormones this section is rather heavy going. I doubt if many clinicians will be greatly enlightened by a nine page chapter, six pages of which are entirely devoted to showing the amino acid sequences in various peptides both animal and human. There are concise chapters on the neuroradiology of pituitary adenomas and neuro-ophthalmological considerations of pituitary tumours. Unfortunately the reproductions of the radiographs are such that the essential details are not easy to see in some instances. The four chapters on the endocrine evaluation of patients with pituitary tumour complete the diagnostic section of the book.

The second half of the book is devoted to the various treatments that are used for pituitary tumour including conventional radiation, heavy ion therapy, implantation of radioactive seeds, transfrontal and trans-sphenoidal microsurgery, stereotaxic thermal ablation and cryohypophysectomy and pharmacological therapy. The fact that such a diversity of methods is presented clearly implied that no one is ideal and perhaps the greatest value of this book to the clinician will be to stimulate him to compare critically the results of his own treatment of choice with those of radically different methods.

DN GRANT