isms, reflecting the author's long-standing interest in experimental neuropathies. The original, concise chapter on skeletal muscles by Daniel and Sabina Strich has been revised by Harriman who added recently described afflictions and informative pictures of muscle histochemistry.

The new edition is more comprehensive in content (an extra 100 pages) and more up-to-date in concept than its predecessor: results obtained by electron microscopy, tissue culture, histochemistry, immunology and virology occasionally complement the more traditional morphology. One only wished that these modern investigations had been incorporated more frequently and discussed at greater length. Economy with space, however, resulted in the omission of repetitive reviews of case reports, thus bringing many disorders into sharper focus. The illustrations are of good quality; they may not always be outstanding but are seldom disappointing. The reference lists bear witness to long gestation: only a few works quoted were published later than 1970.

These three chapters on neuropathology are recommended not only for pathologists but for everyone who is interested in the diseased nervous system. This book makes rewarding reading.

PL LANTOS

Tredgold's "Mental Retardation", 12th Edition Edited by Michael Craft (pp 384; £16) London: Baillière Tindall, 1979.

Tredgold's Mental Deficiency first appeared in 1908 and for many years had the distinction of being the definitive British text on the subject. In spite of its scholarly nature and combination of wisdom and good sense, its reputation suffered and, with changes in attitudes and despair over the services provided in some hospitals for the mentally handicapped, it had come, somewhat unjustly, to epitomise an outdated "medical" model of care identified with institutionalisation.

The publishers and the new editor have retained the marque but taken the courageous step of almost completely remodelling this multi-author work.

Encouraging outward signs are the use of the term "Mental Retardation"

in the title, suggesting that clinicians in this country may be falling in with the internationally accepted nomenclature. The presentation of the volume and distinguished multidisciplinary panel of contributors, all of whom are new (with the notable exception of the author of the chapter on epilepsy) increases the confidence of the reader.

Does the text meet up to these expectations? The answer must be a qualified assurance that this volume will retain its place as one of the two standard text books on the topic in this country.

The clinical section is of particular value in providing an up to date source of reference on the biological courses of mental retardation. It is to be hoped that further editions will demonstrate a response to the editor's request for improved illustrations and that some of the undoubted profits will be used to introduce colour into those illustrating the commoner and more important clinical signs.

The sections on psychiatry and medication are disappointing in neglecting recent research on this topic, as it relates particularly to mental handicap and, generally speaking, the reader would do as well to consult a standard text on psychiatry. The sections on psychology and social work are welcome additions, although those on social work and residential care are of limited and rather parochial value. Throughout the volume the very limited and selected list of references means that the book will be of little value to the research worker except as an introduction to the multidisciplinary nature of the field.

The contribution on the law is of particular interest and, while justifiably critical of the present state of legislation, and the author seems to miss the point that the relatively small number of applications under Sections 29 or 26 to mental hospitals are not because of mental retardation alone but super-added psychiatric illness. The author of this section hints at changes in legislation to protect the rights of the mentally retarded, and hopefully the next edition will include constructive suggestions. Like many multi-author works the rag bag section of chapters covering specialised areas are of varied usefulness. The chapter on "Autism" takes a somewhat idiosyncratic view of the

topic, neglecting much contemporary research, and would have been better included under the section on psychiatry, where the other important links between child psychiatry and mental handicap tend to be neglected. The distinguished contribution on epilepsy clearly points to the need for further research into the neurophysiological aspects of this common secondary handicap in the mentally retarded and would have been better included in an extended section on the neurological aspects of the problem.

These criticisms apart, this new text book is to be welcomed as a major and much needed contribution to the professional care of the mentally handicapped, and of value to students and practitioners alike.

JA CORBETT

Photosensitivity and Epilepsy by ME Newmark and J Kiffin Penry (pp 220; \$24.48) New York: Raven Press, 1979.

This book from the Epilepsy Branch, Neurological Disorders Programme, National Institute of Neurological and Communicative Disorders and Stroke, National Institute of Health, Bethesda, Maryland is an extensive review of the current knowledge on photosensitivity. This is defined as "an abnormal electroencephalographic or clinical response to light" and does not include other forms of photosensitivity such as the dermatological ones. Although the authors claim to have avoided "the use of EEG terms in describing clinical phenomena and vice versa" they have not completely succeeded, for example in the use of the term "photo-convulsive response." The large bibliography quoted is very helpful but little is said about discrepancies in the techniques employed by various authors with considerable diversity of results. A minor portion of Grey-Walter's work has been quoted and, in addition, there is no mention of the large amplitude discharges in the EEG in response to single flashes of light in patients with Bielschowsky-Janski's disease. In many EEG laboratories anticonvulsant treatment is suspended for 1-2 days prior to the EEG: this is one of the most common causes of abnormal responses to photic stimulation in many centres, and this aspect is not discussed. The chapter on animal models of photosen-

sitivity is well presented and informative. The list of references covers just over 24 pages with a subject-index of six pages.

G PAMPIGLIONE

Problems of Aphasia Edited by Y Lebrun and R Hoops (pp 198; 65 Dutch guilders) Lisse, The Netherlands: Swets & Zeitlinger, 1979.

This book contains seven articles on topics related to aphasia. For various reasons it is a very disappointing collection. The articles are neither related to each other nor do they cover the field at all adequately. The major central issues in aphasia—the viability of the classical taxonomy based on Broca's, Wernicke's and conduction aphasia and the functional origins of the disorders so described—are never discussed. In addition the papers tend to be based on sketchy case reports, and are not well situated in modern linguistics or cognitive psychology.

The most interesting paper is a lengthy analysis by Leonard of ideokinetic aphasia and its relation to other disorders, particularly ideokinetic apraxia. Other topics discussed include alexia without agraphia, delayed auditory feedback, pantomime, prosody, acalculia and the linguistic functions of the right hemisphere.

T SHALLICE

Stereotactic Cerebral Irradiation By G Szikla (pp 340; \$48.75) Amsterdam: Elsevier, 1979.

For many years the stereotactic method has allowed an accurate and relatively safe approach to the problems presented by those pathological processes, mostly new growth, deemed inoperable and involving vital and otherwise inaccessible areas of the brain. The method has been used to guide the biopsy needle, and so help delineate the lesion, and to direct therapeutic radiation from an external or implanted source.

The advent of computed tomography with its possibilities for earlier recognition of even smaller pathological targets has given fresh impetus to the study of these techniques. To provide a meeting point for all the various disciplines involved, a symposium devoted to stereotactic cerebral irradiation was held in Paris in July 1979, and the proceedings are recorded in this well produced and well illustrated volume.

Many of the communications concern basic aspects of the methods and their application—the precise measurement of the target volume, the different radio-surgical techniques and their application, the early and late effects of local irradiation. There is a summary of current techniques and a commentary on present problems of dosage specification and other technical matters.

The section devoted to indications and results makes it clear that tumours, both benign and malignant, remain the principal indication for treatment. Some encouraging preliminary results are reported with benign and circumscribed tumours, notably craniopharyngioma and acoustic neuroma. By gamma irradiation it has proved possible to halt growth of tumour and probably to cause its replacement by scar tissue. It is with pituitary tumours, both secreting and non-active alike, where the greatest enthusiasm is evident; where future possibilities seem brightest, despite the established position of present micro-surgical methods. The successful selective blockade of growth hormone secretion from the pituitary gland in patients with acromegaly and diabetic retinopathy is particularly significant for the absence of complications. The problem of the invasive glioma clearly remains intractable, despite all the ingenuity of the therapists.

For those who are involved in stereotactic radiation therapy or who are merely interested in recent developments this volume provides a valuable insight to current work and thought and is an excellent source of reference.

JJ MACCABE

Delirium By Z J Lipowski (pp 567; \$39.75) Springfield Illinois: Charles C. Thomas, 1980.

The author tells us that this is the first monograph on delirium to be published in English. It will prove an invaluable work of reference and the early chapters, at least, can be read with pleasure. The history of the concept, the detailed clinical features, the aetiology and pathogenesis, the diagnosis and the management of delirium are all covered in great detail in the early chapters, in each case with an exhaustive survey of the literature, from the present day to classical times. The general argument of the book is that

all forms of clouding of consciousness (or of disturbance of wakefulness, hyperactive and hypoactive) stem from the same basic disorder and should be subsumed under the category of delirium, while earlier authors often confined the term delirium to hyperactive states.

The later chapters consider all the possible causes of delirium, and also consider delirium in special settings (the puerperium, surgery, old age). The main use of these chapters is as a source of references to the literature.

The book is long and sometimes repetitive, but it is a unique work and can be warmly recommended. It will be of interest to all practising clinicians including, of course, neurologists and psychiatrists.

JL GIBBONS

Frontiers in Neuroendocrinology, vol 6. Edited by L Martini and WF Ganong (pp 428; \$53.72) New York: Raven Press, 1980.

The latest volume of *Frontiers in Neuroendocrinology* provides an interesting addition to the series. Dealing largely with the isolation, synthesis and characterisation of various hormones it carries throughout an important message. Namely, that many of these hormones occur simultaneously in a number of organs. In particular the occurrence of practically all pituitary hormones within the brain as well as in the pituitary gland is emphasised. Indeed, local synthesis may well occur within the brain. So-called growth hormone in the amygdala is compelling evidence of this. An interesting chapter on peptides common to the gut and brain continues this theme showing that a number of peptides such as cholecystokinin and vaso-active intestinal polypeptide, first isolated from the gastro-intestinal tract, are now known to occur within the brain. I particularly enjoyed the chapter dealing with neurotensin, another peptide widely distributed throughout the central nervous system and also found in high concentrations in portions of the gastro-intestinal tract. The relationship between hormone-containing neuronal systems and catecholamine containing neurones is also examined in this volume. It has been demonstrated