vital clue to reconnect the memory circuits of the mind (in the same way that laevodopa has mobilised patients with Parkinson's disease); clinical medicine can offer to make the whole person as healthy as possible; but, epidemiology could provide the essential vision for effective medical investigation and management. This symposium report allows us to see how epidemiology has been progressing in Scandinavia and gives glimpses of the way similar work and ideas have been developing in Germany and England.

BRIAN LIVESLEY

The Practice of Pediatric Neurology (2nd edition). By Kenneth F Swaiman, Francis S Wright. Two volumes (Pp 1,322; £125.00). London: Year Book Medical Publishers Ltd. (a C. V. Mosby Publication), 1982.

More text-books of Child Neurology originate from the United States than from anywhere else and their quality has varied. This is an impressive book. For their second edition the editors have assembled a task-force of 48 contributors. Thirty-six chapters, in two volumes, are divided, logically, into three unequal sections. The first and shorter, "Evaluation of the patients' problems" discusses the history, examination and laboratory investigation, with due emphasis given to the developmental aspects. (I was happy to read that the examination should be pleasant and enjoyable for the child as well as for the examiner; this is true and worth saying, odd though it might appear in the context of the neurology of adults.)

In neurological textbooks the choice of whether to use a "symptom" or a "system" approach is a difficult one, and neither alone proves entirely satisfactory, so that a mixture of the two is often used. The authors have opted to use both methods, the second section being devoted to "symptoms and signs of neurologic diseases in childhood" and the third to a discussion of those diseases. The problems of duplication and repetition are to some extent overcome by the fact that the chapters on symptoms and signs are written, with one exception, by single authors, while those on diseases are entrusted to consortia of contributors numbering between three and seven, which include the writers of the relevant earlier chapter.

The neurodegenerative disorders, poorly described in many text books, are well dealt with by the authors concerned. If the allocation of particular diseases to the chapter on metabolic disorders or

degenerative disorders of the CNS seems rather arbitrary, this arrangement is symptomatic of the difficulty resulting from the varying stages of understanding of these conditions in terms of basic biochemical and enzymatic defects. The accounts given are probably the best available today, being well provided with references old and new, cis—and transatlantic, and with historical reviews of the evolution of knowledge. English neurologists will be glad to see FE Batten given credit for the early accounts of neuronal ceroid lipofuscinosis (though in truth the earliest account was that of Stengel in 1826—who had the disadvantage of writing in Norwegian).

In the chapter of seizure disorders with seven contributors, the section on febrile seizures stands out. In 3½ pages, Karin Nelson, whose work has done much to clarify the subject, gives a distillate of current data and concepts with clearly stated figures for risk factors for subsequent epilepsy after febrile seizures. In some other areas in this chapter not all would agree with the emphasis given. For example arguments are advanced why no arbitrary division should be made between infantile spasms and similar seizures of later childhood, but it seems to this reader that infantile spasms have sufficient features distinguishing them from other forms of myoclonic seizure to merit separate discussion. More stress might have been laid on the frequency with which stigmata of tuberous sclerosis are found in children presenting with infantile spasms and the numbers of such cases in which a parent and apparently healthy siblings may show similar stigmata. Among "partial seizures with elementary symptomatology", focal seizures of "sylvian" type with centrotemporal spike focus are given a short paragraph, but deserve more expanded treatment as being commoner than is generally appreciated and having a good prognosis. They also deserve some references, since it was as long ago as 1967 that Lombroso, in Boston, showed this type of seizure generally to have a favourable outcome both clinically and as regards the EEG. The good response commonly seen to carbamazepine could also have been stressed. I was rather surprised also to see liver damage listed among "common toxic symptoms and signs" for both carbamazepine and valproic acid. Admittedly the latter drug is used in Britain as sodium valproate, with which serious liver problems do not seem to be common. The suggested daily dose of carbamazepine, 20–40 mg/kg, is double that suggested by most

physicians and is likely to lead to the lethargy and ataxia which are listed as other common toxic symptoms and signs.

Learning disabilities and associated conditions are well reviewed. Methyphenidate, a drug perhaps under-used in Britain and much more widely used in the United States, is discussed helpfully and the need is stressed to monitor carefully not only the "target symptom", usually hyperactivity, but also other aspects of the child's function, such as learning and cognition. The question of food additives as a possible factor is increasingly raised by parents of overactive children in the United Kingdom as reports from North America become more widely known. The authors believe the available evidence does not justify use of an additive-free diet and it is helpful to have an authoritative statement of this kind based on wide experience, though one sees occasional cases in which the diet does seem beneficial.

Though expensive, the book seems good value for money. The quality of the illustrations, clinical, radiological and pathological, is generally high and there are many excellent anatomical drawings. The two volumes have an attractive cover design and are a pleasure to handle. The index and introductory adnexa are repeated in the second volume for the reader's convenience, a system deserving wider use. This book can be highly recommended despite some minor shortcomings of the kind mentioned.

EM BRETT

Current Topics in Neuroendocrinology: Adrenal Actions on Brain. Edited by D Ganten and D Pfaff. (Pp 153; \$34.70). Berlin: Springer-Verlag. 1982

This book is about the action of steroids, not catecholamines, on the brain. Fourteen authors from the USA, London and Utrecht give an authoritative account of five highly specialised topics. These include the presence of glucocorticoid receptors in the brain and particularly in the hippocampus; the role of steroids in brain development; the extremely complex feedback control mechanisms of anterior pituitary gland ACTH secretion; steroid actions at motor nerve terminals; and behavioural changes caused by steroids. This is all very heavy reading. Yet despite this the topics discussed have great research interest as well as considerable clinical implications. Among the steroid hormones, the effect of glucocorticoid on nervous system excitability are exceptional and spontaneous seizures were often reported in early patients

Book reviews

treated with high doses of ACTH or cortisone. In the field of psychiatry, changes in dexamethasone-ACTH response appear to hold an important clue as to the origin of depression. In the field of endocrinology there is a surprising complexity of ACTH release control by VIP, catecholamines, and the recently identified corticotropin-releasing factor. Although this well-written book contains no immediate answers for the mentally or physically ill, it will be read with considerable interest by all interested in the brain as a target organ for many different hormones.

JD PARKES

Handbook of Neurochemistry—2nd ed. Vol 1—Chemical and Cellular Architecture. Edited by Abel Lajtha. (Pp 496; \$65.) New York: Plenum Publishing Corporation, 1982.

The exponential growth in science since the first edition of this book was published in 1969 is readily apparent in the modern revised edition. Nearly the whole volume refers to work conducted in the last twelve years without ignoring the contributions made by early researchers in the field of neurochemistry. Because of the wide-ranging nature of the subjects covered, the authors have been obliged to be selective in approach to their allotted subjects and yet, at the same time, they have condensed a lot of useful information into the available space. The text is coherent, the English generally good and the content made for thoroughly good reading. Also, from the practical standpoint, most of the chapters provide very useful information concerning the methodology and technology behind each topic. In view of the size of the book, the term "Handbook" might seem paradoxical. However, in times when catholic interests in science have made way for specialisation, this volume is ideal for those of us who have to venture out of our own particular field occasionally on to unfamiliar ground. Certainly I would recommend this volume as a reference book to any laboratory or establishment involved with neurochemistry and I look forward to the publication of the remaining volumes of this series.

C A REAVILL

Computerized Tomography in Neuro-Ophthalmology. By IF Moseley and MD Sanders. (Pp 302; £27.50.) London: Chapman and Hall, 1982.

I should, as they say in the House of Commons, declare my interests: I meet

Michael Sanders every week at St Thomas' Hospital Medical Ophthalmology Unit, and Ian Moseley has contributed chapters to books that I have edited. Further, the publishers originally asked me whether they should go ahead and I advised them in the affirmative but said that there would not be much of a sale. I think I was wrong on the latter since anyone who orders a CT scan on an orbit will need to have this book, be he neurologist, neurosurgeon or ophthalmologist. Each would probably have to buy three copies, one for themselves, one for their department of radiology and another for the hospital library.

The introduction includes the physical principles of CT, and there are chapters on anatomy, orbital and optic nerve diseases, visual loss, eye movement disorders and the relationship of CT to other methods of investigation.

It is beautifully produced and the reproductions are excellent; I believe it to be the definitive work on this subject but I may well be prejudiced.

F CLIFFORD ROSE

The Adolescent Spine 2nd ed. by Hugo A Keim. (Pp 254; DM 82, \$8.20.) Heidelberg: Springer-Verlag, 1982.

This book fills an important gap in the library of useful references for anyone who finds himself concerned in the treatment of children's spinal disorders.

Because severe structural changes in the adolescent spine are relatively uncommon, early diagnosis and treatment are often missed. The results of failure to take action, particularly during periods of rapid growth, can very soon make the situation irretrievable. This book underlines the unusual presentation of spinal problems in the adolescent, which may, as a result, not be appreciated fully at an early stage. The evaluation of a spinal problem is always vitally important. This is comprehensively and well covered. There is a particularly concise and valuable chapter on the problems of the cervical spine. The discussion of structural deformity, both scoliosis and kyphosis, is extensive for a book of this type. The rapid changes in treatment, both conservative and surgical make the excessive dogmatism at times unfortunate, but the book does underline some of the pitfalls which can be avoided in diagnosing deformities, particularly following destabilising operations, infections and tumours.

The book is very readable and well illustrated and should be widely read. The price

to pay for not appreciating progression both of deformity and of neurology, can be high.

TR MORLEY

Recent Advances in Clinical Psychiatry. Edited by K. Granville Grossman. Number 4. Edinburgh: Churchill Livingstone, 1982. £16.00.

This latest edition of *Recent Advances*, will be as valuable to its purchasers as previous ones have been. The series, now over a decade old, has succeeded in providing reviews on a limited number of topics which give to examiners and examinees alike comprehensive information in an easily digestible format. The selection in this volume includes reviews of some important aspects of child psychiatry by Kelvin and Goodjer, of psychotherapy by Bloch and self harm by Morgan. For the sexually orientated there is hysterectomy and sterilization by Gath and Cooper, sex chromosome disorders by Pitcher and transsexualism by Hoeing. The psychopharmacologists and biological psychiatrists are given mania by Silverstone and Cookson, long-acting neuroleptics by Don Johnson and antidepressant drugs by Montgomery. The collection is completed by an excellent review of the use of computed tomography in dementia and depression by Jacoby, and for those requiring information on our most popular disease, anorexia nervosa by Palmer.

The production is good with a nice purple soft back cover; the price is quite reasonable and the contents which may, like a well known lager "reach the parts that others don't reach", are highly recommended.

MICHAEL TRIMBLE