superb monograph on the condition that modern society faces with increasing frequency. Their approach, as indicated in the title is clinical, with accent on practical matters such as bedside evaluation, differential diagnosis and investigation. The section on the Mental Status Examination is a model of its kind and should be required reading for all neurologists in training. There follow detailed descriptions of all the common (and uncommon) diseases that may cause dementia in adult life. Considerable attention is given to clinical features of the dementia in each disorder, but other neurological manifestations are given their due weight, and there are valuable descriptions of neuropathology and investigative findings. Separate chapters deal with the problems of “Aging and Senility”, and the use of “Laboratory Aids in the Diagnosis of Dementia.” Here the authors take a firm stance on full investigation, including CT scan and EEG, of all patients presenting with progressive intellectual deterioration. Medically this must be correct; certainly I would wish my physician to follow such a course before consigning me to Shakespeare’s second childhood. It is for the politicians to tell me, and my patients, that this is economically impracticable.

The book is so good that it seems churlish to quibble at minor points (for example, the reference to Benson et al. 1982 in table 1-1 is not given in the otherwise excellent and extensive bibliography). However, there is one major issue which requires some comment. A firm distinction between cortical and subcortical dementia is drawn and used to divide the volume into separate sections. Thus Alzheimer’s disease and Pick’s disease are cortical dementias, while extrapyramidal disorders, hydrocephalus and toxic-metabolic conditions are held to cause a different clinical picture of dementia because they “produce maximal dysfunction in the basal ganglia, thalamus and brainstem”. This distinction may be too rigid. The recent emphasis on lesions to subcortical structures in substantia innominata in Alzheimer’s disease, and the discovery that the demented Parkinsonian has cortical cholinergic deficit, blurs this separation on anatomical and biochemical grounds. The clinical distinctions (for example aphasias in cortical dementias, various early movement disorders in subcortical dementias) may hold, but subtle differences in intellectual and cognitive functions may have more to do with which neurotransmitter systems are involved in the cortex than to where they arise.

Another point of argument is whether Alzheimer’s disease can be diagnosed in life on the basis of characteristic clinical features, or whether it is a presumption based upon exclusion of other causes of dementia in the appropriate age group. No doubt in typical cases the subsequent pathological proof of quantitatively significant Alzheimer change in the brain will show a high degree of correlation with clinical diagnosis in life. However, this is less certain in atypical cases and many would still hold to the view that a confident clinical diagnosis cannot be made to cover all presentations of Alzheimer’s disease, or to exclude other degenerative conditions. This debate will be resolved by statistical clinico-pathological correlation.

I am sure that Cummings and Benson’s book will be used by many. It can be read cover-to-cover by anyone beginning in the field of dementia, and will be an invaluable source of reference to those already engaged in this area.

CD Marsden


This is one of the dozen or so American text-atlas books now available on cranial computed tomography—all of whom as bland, filling and conveniently-packaged as a Macdonald hamburger. Your reviewer having digested the contents of this one experienced no residual hunger, but the prospect of unmarket alternatives left him feeling unfulfilled.

This book is the second edition of one of the first textbooks to appear on CT head scanning—a distinction in itself, indicating the sales success of the original. The new edition consists of twenty chapters of text, each tailored by a list of references, and each appropriately enhanced by diagrams, differential-diagnostic tables and CT images. A total of 368 cases is illustrated, comprising over 1000 carefully chosen scan images, and the clinical information and diagnosis of each patient is given in the caption. This material merits study on its own as a didactic exercise, which would benefit any clinical neurologist or radiologist, young or old, seeking an overview of the subject. It is noticeable that the scans were selected for their information content rather than technical perfection, although none is substandard.

The arrangement of the textual material reflects the multi-disciplinary status of the three authors—a physicist, a neurologist and a radiologist who are respected members of an American teaching hospital. The first four chapters are used to unveil the new technique; they introduce the reader to the principles and technique of computed tomography, describe the applied anatomy of the brain and orbits, and comment upon the impact of scanning on conventional investigative methods. The reviewer feels that this section could have been omitted from the second edition. The titles of the remaining twenty chapters, the clinical part, comprise a mix of topographical and pathological headings and syndrome diagnoses, for example. Progressive Deficit (discussing neoplasms), Rapid Onset Deficit (infarction, haematomas and malformations), Juxtasellar Abnormalities, Pediatric Disorders, Intracranial Calcification and Bone Abnormalities, and so on. They emphasise the difficulty that all authors encounter in choosing a sensible format for discussing CT in intracranial disease, and reveal the confusion that may arise when radiological findings are directly linked to clinical syndromes (rather than in terms of pathology or topography). This approach prompts the question, who was the book written for? Your reviewer, a neuroradiologist, came across passages that were inadequate for his needs, and concluded that the book was more likely to serve the neurologist as a bench reference in his daily practice. As such, it qualifies for a seal of approval as a high-quality, comprehensive account of this now-standard investigation which none should be embarrassed to possess and will most use frequently.

EH Burrows


The First International Conference in Hemispheric Laterality in Psychopathology met at the Charing Cross Hospital in London in 1978. The Second Meeting was held in Banff, Alberta, in 1982. The proceedings of the latter are contained in this volume, one of a series on biological psychiatry from the Elsevier Press.

It has become increasingly apparent that the cerebral hemispheres are specialised not only with respect to language but for
other aspects of higher mental function, perception and effect. The hemisphere
dominant for language operates in an
analytical and sequential mode; the non-
dominant hemisphere is holistic and syn-
thetic. Recognition of these differences has
prompted a substantial body of psychiatric
research. An early paper by one of the con-
ference editors, Pierre Flor-Henry, focused
attention on the psychoses, and here by
and large, is where it has remained. In that
study of psychotic epilepsies, a constella-
tion of clinical phenomena not dissimilar
from schizophrenia was found to be associ-
ated with epileptic foci in the left hemi-
sphere; less obviously, affective symp-
tomatology was linked with right hemi-
sphere foci. Although this analysis and
interpretation of data was not without its
critics, it massively influenced subsequent
research; confirmation flowed in from a
variety of sources.

Psychiatry, however, was never likely to
be so simple. The passage of time and the
skepticism of unsympathetic reviewers has
dealt harshly with laterality theory; but if
some of the old certainty has departed, the
uncommitted reader should welcome the
more critical and objective mood of the
Canadian meeting. Studies in affective dis-
orders and schizophrenia again predomi-
nate and neuropsychology and psychophysiology
each account for a third of the space; but work on personality dis-
order, neurosis and alcoholism is presented
and there are useful chapters on CT scan-
ing techniques, PET and cerebral circula-
tion. The quality of contributions varies
considerably and some of the text is slackly
edited. Few of the papers contain sum-
maries, a crucial omission in so technical an
area. Indeed this is very much a workshop
book for the cognocenti and definitely not
for those seeking an introduction to the
subject. The former, those at least who
failed to make the journey to Banff, may
feel that the opportunity to keep abreast of
a tantalisingly difficult subject justifies the
not inconsiderable price of the book.

BK TOOME

Imaging of Infections and Inflammations of
the Central Nervous System: Computed
Tomography, Ultrasound and Nuclear
Magnetic Resonance. By Dieter Enzmann.
(Pp 360; $68.50.) New York: Raven Press,
1983.

Unlike many radiological textbooks, this is
a serious work, for which the author is to
be highly commended. Although amply
and informatively illustrated, it is far more
than an atlas. Major chapters are devoted
to focal and diffuse parenchymal infec-
tions, infection in hosts with compromised
immunity, and to acute meningitis. The
first of these is excellent, including exten-
sive references; however, I remain uncon-
vinced by the contradictory arguments
adduced for the radiological differentiation
of cerebritis and abscess.

The book's balance is distorted by
epidemiological accident: British readers
will find it odd that cystercerosis merits
considerably greater space than tuber-
culosi, which is much commoner world-
wide. Indeed, some of the statements about
the latter (rarity of brain stem lesions; fre-
cuency of calcium deposition) suggest very
limited direct experience. The same is true
of cerebral malaria and hydatid disease
(illustrated by one markedly atypical example).
Omission of demyelinating dis-
ease of unknown aetiology in a text on cen-
tral nervous system inflammations may also
reflect the low incidence of multiple
sclerosis in northern California. However,
discussion of these conditions would have
been more germane than the extended
explanation of magnetic resonance imaging
which dominates the introductory chapter.

Dr Enzmann's writing is uneven, but
quintessentially American: punchy and
ponderous by turns; fortunately, the
former tone predominates. The illustra-
tions are generally excellent, although I
was not always certain that the text refer-
rred to the correct figure; I found only one
inverted image. The bibliography is splen-
did, but the index poor: as a single exam-
ple, papovavirus, mentioned on pages 150
and 289, fails to appear in it.

Only one further geographically
imposed drawback restrains me from giv-
ing this handsome publication the highest
recommendation: the exchange rate, which
currently inflates its price to almost £50.

IVAN MOSELEY

Neurological Examination of Infants and
Children (Clinics in Developmental
Medicine Nos. 84/85). By Henry W
Baird and Eleanor C. Gordon. (Pp 249; £12.00.)
Oxford: Blackwell Scientific Publications,
1983.

Neurological Examination of Children by
the late Richmond Paine and Thomas
Oppé seemed to be one of those timeless
masterpieces, that acted as a guide as well
as a bible to trainee paediatricians and
trainee neurologists. The value of that text
has been beyond dispute and must surely
have lead Spastics International Medical
Publications towards commissioning a new
version of this book some 17 years after the
original appeared.

The new title Neurological Examination of
Infants and Children differs slightly but
significantly from the former. The authors
of this book, Henry Baird and Eleanor
Gordon, hail from Philadelphia. The
difference in title is probably not purely of
semantic significance but reflects a newer
approach that has evolved over the last
decade to a child with a suspected
neurological disorder.

The book is divided into 11 chapters
each of which have comprehensive dis-
sions in which attempts are made to relate
the clinical phenomena under discussion
with specific disease states. Illustrations are
almost exclusively line drawings which
times are often rather poor representations
of true clinical material. Furthermore, the
comments on specific disease states at
times are inaccurate, sometimes too brief
to be instructive and must inevitably lead
to some confusion in the minds of those with
less experience. There are quite a large
typeographical, grammatical
and spelling errors within the book.

But in spite of these reservations it must
surely be important to consider the book as
a whole. It is the opinion of this reviewer
that like its predecessor it is a vital and
valuable book which would be welcomed
by at least any department of paediatrics
or neurology. The text that is being presented
should be of interest and value to a very
wide readership. For the paediatrician it
provides immense detail in terms of
neurological function, while to the
neurologist a great deal in the way in which
a child with a neurological dysfunction
differs from an adult. For students of either
these two specialties is a most worthy
introduction to the subject. But more than
this it should be recommended reading to
any medical student. Further, it should
be able to provide a valuable service to mem-
bers of other professions allied to
medicine—physiotherapy, speech therapy,
occupational therapy, and many other simi-
lar professions.

The authors deserve to be congratulated
and also thanked for the valuable service
that they have rendered.

GWILYM HOSKING