

followed in turn by three-dimensional methods popularly known as SPECT. Single photon emission, the use of cold xenon and finally positron emission (PET) complete this aspect of the picture. Four contributions on nuclear magnetic resonance and a section on Doppler sonography round off the story.

Inevitably in a production of this kind, which comprises communications to an international symposium held in Heidelberg in 1983, the contributions vary in quality. Nevertheless, the book is a valuable compendium of the methodology of measurement of rCBF and metabolism and as such will be a useful reference source for workers in this field.

J MARSHALL

**Recent Advances in Clinical Psychiatry—5.** Edited by Kenneth Granville-Grossman. (Pp 277; £22.00.) Edinburgh: Churchill Livingstone, 1985.

This 5th edition is as welcome as its predecessors. The series aims to provide discerning and critical accounts of recent developments in psychiatry, written by acknowledged experts and this volume will be of interest not only to those practising psychiatry but to others in related specialties. The title is perhaps a little misleading in that relatively few chapters reflect actual advances, but the others are valuable distillations of current knowledge in a particular area or "state of the art" descriptions of techniques or investigations. Volumes of this sort manage to combine a close approximation to the immediacy achieved by a "Year Book", with the much more considered approach possible in a lengthy and detailed review article. As with all reviews readers must remember that it is impossible to be impartial. The exhaustive lists of references are a bonus.

Chapters which could be considered as describing recent advances include those on the new brain imaging techniques and on neuropeptides. The first of these provides a clear review of previous techniques, including CT scans, and the relevant findings, followed by descriptions of the exciting developments which may allow us to study brain function, rather than structure, safely *in vivo*. Some of the preliminary results of studies of cerebral blood flow are presented and the possible contribution of positron

emission tomography and magnetic resonance imaging to the exploration of the biological basis of psychiatric illness are anticipated. The chapter on neuropeptides emphasises that their discovery means the taking of a very different, and much more complex view of brain function than before. These substances represent a large new generation of brain transmitters whose role in communication extends beyond typical neurotransmission, through neuromodulation to neuroendocrine activity. Much of the information which could be useful to psychiatry is not yet available and the author cautions against the development of a neuropeptide "bandwagon".

Chapters which could be described as distillations of current knowledge include those on psychosocial aspects of drug abuse, emotional aspects of physical illness, psychiatric aspects of cancer, culture-bound syndromes, benzodiazepines, drug treatments in child psychiatry and the sequelae of head injury. Each is written by one or more enthusiasts and represents a very informative and full account of the present state of knowledge. It is difficult to select particular chapters for comment, and each reader will find some more useful than others. To take just one, the chapter on head injury makes some very interesting comments on the late sequelae of head injury not accompanied by unconsciousness. It appears that evidence now exists to suggest that Miller's views on compensation have disadvantaged many sufferers.

The subject matter of the third group of chapters, those describing the "state of the art" includes cognitive therapy, family treatment in schizophrenia and biological markers in depression. The styles of these chapters are very different, from a very clear and balanced account of cognitive therapy in its current context, to a very enthusiastic and persuasive account of family therapy in schizophrenia, to a concise description of the place of biological markers in the understanding of depressive illness.

Books which bring such detailed analysis quickly to their readers must be very hard to edit and Dr Granville-Grossman is to be congratulated again for the general standard of "readability" of the contents. If such a volume were to run a second edition, then the chapters on head injury, and particularly on the culture-bound syndrome could be clarified with benefit, and one could wish for authors to be more critical in their use of classifications of depressive illness. There are, however, small criticisms of an otherwise very useful addition to the series.

ISOBEL R CARD

**The Acute Stroke.** By Norris and Hachinski. (Pp 286; \$56.25.) New York: FA Davis, UK Distrib: Quest-Meridien Ltd, 1985.

The literature on acute stroke is replete with the proceedings of scientific meetings and it is refreshing to read a book that is not a multi-author monstrosity but a carefully constructed monograph by two authors. Drs Hachinski and Norris worked together for several years at the Acute Stroke Unit in Toronto and the book is based on this experience. It is intended to be a guide for physicians dealing with acute stroke and gives definite guidelines on clinical assessment, investigations, management and treatment. Others who are intimately involved in cerebrovascular research are certain to challenge certain points, but generally the advice given is in keeping with modern thinking. There is an extensive reference list provided, but with books of this nature there is inevitably some delay before publication. Some recent references are omitted including those of the Cerebral Embolism Study Group on the dangers of anticoagulation following emboli of cardiac origin.

There are a few inconsistencies, possibly between the two authors. At one point they state that acute stroke units do not affect the early mortality rate and elsewhere that the reduction in mortality might produce an increased morbidity.

Generally, my quibbles are only minor and I think this book should prove to be very useful as a guide to all physicians, who have to deal with patients who have suffered a recent stroke.

DJ THOMAS

**Modern Approaches to the Dementias. Part I: Etiology and Pathophysiology. Part II: Clinical and Therapeutic.** *Aspects Interdisciplinary Topics in Gerontology Series 19 & 20.* Edited by F Clifford Rose. (Pp 230 & 202; Complete set \$143.00.) Basel: S Karger, 1985.

These volumes are the outcome of a conference on Dementia held in London in 1983. The papers collected cover a wide range of research on dementia.

Part I is divided into sections covering aetiological and genetic aspects, immunological factors, advances in histopathology and neurotransmitter metabolism. Unfortunately, the format as well as the quality of the papers varies, and only some attempt an overall synthesis or perspective, while many