lower limbs, and Evert Knutsson's on the
different types of spastic restraint. The basic
science contributions are more impressive,
and include several excellent chapters on
regeneration in the nervous system as well as
an interesting account of the prevention of
muscle atrophy after denervation by direct
electrical stimulation in the rat.

This is a very expensive book which few
individuals will wish to buy, but it is a useful
source of ideas and references which would be
valuable in any teaching hospital, medical
school or basic science library.

DL MCLELLAN

Neurological Disturbances in Diabetes Mellitus. Revised 2nd Edition. By VM
Prikhozhan. (Pp 528; £14.95.) Eastbourne:

This book is mainly of interest in giving an
insight into the clinical practice of medicine
in Russia, since unfortunately our Russian
colleagues are all too infrequently represen-
ted at international gatherings, and there
is often difficulty in communication when
they are there. It contains an obsessionial
documentation of all the neurological com-
lications that can occur in diabetes. There is
also an obsession with classification and
wrangles over nomenclature. It is surprising
to read that 30 to 39% of children born to
diabetic mothers are mentally retarded and
one wonders at the methods of diagnosis
and definitions resulting in this statement.
As a reminder that neurology is still a
branch of neuropsychiatry in Russia, the
importance of psychological factors in the
precipitation of diabetes and the importance
of psychotherapy in its management are
discussed.

Although various theories of the
aetiology of diabetic neuropathy that are
under discussion in the western world, the
sorbitol-myoinositol-Na+ K+ ATPase story,
the importance of intraneural microangio-
pathy and possible hypoxia of nerves are
mentioned, they are given less prominence
than by experts elsewhere and the experi-
mental evidence which we consider relevant
to this discussion is rarely cited.

In the section on therapy a list of spas
providing physical treatment for diabetes is
given with the particular characteristics of
the water and mud available. The vogue of
aldosorbeductase inhibition currently so pop-
ularly in the west has not yet reached Russia.
Vitamin therapy is given some prominence.
The book is very reasonably priced and is
recommended to anyone preposing to visit
Russia or have contact with Russian col-
leagues to give a starting point for a
dialogue.

PAMELA M LE QUESN

Optic Neuritis. Edited by RF Hess and GT
Plant. (Pp 310; £35.00.) Cambridge: Cam-

Is it possible to enjoy reading a book and yet
not recommend it?

This volume is based on a symposium
held in November 1984 on the occasion of
the centenary of Nettleship's publication on
Retrocoar Neuritis, an abridged version of
which forms the appendix. There are 13
chapters, only two of which are clinically
orientated (an excellent one by Heron on
differential diagnosis, the other being on
optic neuritis of childhood). There are two
chapters on neuropathology, two on psy-
chophysics, two on electrophysiology and
two on virus induced demyelination in the
mouse optic nerve, all of a very high
scientific calibre. There are first class chap-
ters on pathogenesis (McDonald) and
immunology (Compston) but these would
sit as happily in a book entitled Multiple
Sclerosis.

The final chapter entitled "The Interior
Journey and Beyond: An Artist's view of
Optic Neuritis" is intriguing. It begins with a
quote from Robert Louis Stevenson's Trav-
elis with a Donkey: "For my part I travel not
to go anywhere but to go"—not an inap-
propriate summary for this book with its
idiosyncratic eclecticism of choice of topics
that is more likely to appeal to physiologists
than clinical neurologists. The bare title of
Optic Neuritis is misleading and perhaps a
qualifying sub-heading should have been
added. For these reasons, the answer to the
question at the beginning of the review has
to be answered in the affirmative.

F CLIFFORD ROSE

Molecular Mechanisms of Ischemic Brain
Damage (Progress in Brain Research Vol
63) Edited by K Kogure, K-A Hossmann,
BK Siesjö, FA Welsh. (Pp 264; $79.75.)
Amsterdam: Elsevier Biomedical Press,
1985.

Hitherto, basic research in cerebrovascular
disease has concentrated mainly on cerebral
blood flow and on the metabolism of oxygen
and glucose. This led in turn to work on the
disturbance of acid-base balance, ATP and
cations produced by ischaemia. Despite
immense effort and great advance in knowl-
edge a therapeutic break-through has not
followed. Workers are therefore turning to the
study of cellular mechanisms in
ischaemia in their search for the key.

One example will serve to emphasise the
importance of this approach. The major role
of mitochondria is to synthesise ATP in
aerobic cells yet, when presented with free
Ca2+ 10 μg/m, isolated mito-
ochondria cease to synthesise ATP and accu-
amulate the cation. This is observed in iso-
lated mitochondria. What is happening in
vivo? All neurons do not exhibit the same
susceptibility to ischaemia. They differ at the
neurochemical, microphysiological and
molecular levels.

The present volume presents a valuable
survey of the present state of knowledge in
the field. The status of the four editors and
of many of the contributors has ensured that
the volume is succinct, readable and author-
itative. It will be of great value not only to
those working at the molecular level but also
to those with a broader interest in cerebral
ischaemia who wish to learn in a relatively
painless fashion of the present state of the
art.

JOHN MARSHALL

Notice

Ninth International Congress of Neurological
Surgery. This will be held in New Delhi,
India, 8–13th October 1989. Information
may be obtained from Dr AK Banerji,
Organising Secretary, Post Box No 4543,
New Delhi 110016.