Book reviews

SPECT brain images using IMP and other compounds relate to cerebral blood flow and that thus the most promising applications of this technique concerns cerebrovascular diseases. However, two papers deal with brain tumours, one with epilepsy, and three present only a few case reports of patients with vascular problems. The last paper only (using HIPDM) mentions a larger number of cerebrovascular patients but is rather superficial. In general the clinical significance of the scan results is not clear: abnormal patterns of radionuclide distribution may be proportionate within (unknown) limits to tissue perfusion disturbances, but only speculations are given how that information can be used in a clinical setting. A big handicap is that no absolute quantitation can be achieved with SPECT. It has to be admitted, however, that the data presented in the book are preliminary. On the other hand Schober and colleagues present a nice study comparing ^{123}I IMP SPECT, conventional $^{99\text{m}}\text{Tc}$ -DTPA scans and ^{11}C -methionine PET scans in a group of brain tumour patients.

It is a pity that this book appeared so late: the SPECT field has shown many developments since the symposium was held. IMP is hardly used anymore and is replaced by technetium labelled PAO derivatives which are easier and cheaper to produce and have several other advantages. Still the book is a good introduction for those who wish to obtain an overview of the complexity of "functional imaging".

KL LEENDERS

Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy. By Alan EH Emery. (Pp 313; £35.00.) Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987.

This is a good moment for a monograph on Duchenne muscular dystrophy to appear. Modern genetics has identified this elusive gene, and the success of this work has focused the attention of many people on the disorder, in addition to those who encounter it in their regular practice.

Alan Emery has long experience of the condition, partly from his major contributions to research on the genetic aspects, partly from involvement in the management of patients and their families. This broad experience makes for a balanced and sympathetic account of the disorder, which is of special value in bringing together a wealth of information previously scattered throughout the scientific literature.

The book takes us through the historical development of our knowledge, gives much

information on clinical aspects and natural history, and discusses in detail the genetics, and such practical aspects as carrier and prenatal detection. It then gives a full, clear and extremely up to date account of the molecular genetics work that has identified the gene, something that will be of particular value for clinicians unfamiliar with the power of these new genetic approaches.

The section on biochemical and other experimental work appears, inevitably, rather flat by contrast with these advances. One suspects that much of this will require reassessment when we finally identify the gene product.

All neurologists will benefit from reading this book and most will wish to buy it. The developments in Duchenne muscular dystrophy today will undoubtedly be a parallel for other neurological disorders tomorrow. Both author and publisher should be congratulated on a valuable, enjoyable and timely book.

PETER HARPER

Magnetic Resonance Annual 1987. Edited by Herbert Y Kressel. (Pp 300; \$79.50.) New York: Raven Press, 1986.

This is the 3rd volume in the series and has brought together chapters by experienced workers on specific clinical entities, concepts and current advances. The opening chapters are reviews of important CNS topics: sella and temporal bone, cerebral ischaemia and infarction, and head and neck haemorrhage. They account for one-third of the book content, are very detailed and well presented. A chapter on paediatric disease is divided almost equally between CNS and other systems. The special problems of imaging children are discussed briefly before illustrating clinical utilisation. There are useful chapters on MRI of the female pelvis and one on its use in musculoskeletal primary malignant tumours.

The longest chapter is on MR angiography. The basic principles are described in detail as is the authors' practical approach to flow imaging. Finally, the use of contrast agents and the current state of imaging at very high fields are discussed. These three chapters on developmental areas provide a fund of information and a sound basis of knowledge for these involved in, or contemplating such work.

Overall, the book has attained a very high standard, the illustrations are of good quality and the standard of production excellent.

There has been no attempt to overstate the usefulness of MRI, a balanced view having been maintained throughout. It is a book for the specialist in the field of MRI to whom it is recommended.

P MACPHERSON

A Colour Atlas of Stroke: Cerebrovascular Disease and its Management. By Asif Kamal. (Pp 224; £32.00.) London: Wolfe Medical Publications Ltd, 1987

This book, the most recent in the series of Wolfe Medical atlases, is produced by Dr Asif Kamal, a consultant geriatrician in Lincoln. It is not clear for whom the book is intended although in the preface the author expresses the hope that it will be of value to all those who are concerned with treatment and rehabilitation of stroke patients.

In creating an atlas, one of the greatest difficulties is to ensure that the text is succinct, relevant and to the point enhancing and explaining the photographs which are included. Unfortunately the present book fails in each of these criteria. There is repetition on many of the pages of text, irrelevantancies of both text and photographs and inaccuracies in the description of the incidence of the prevalence of stroke disease, its investigation and management.

An atlas will succeed or fail on the standard of photographs and diagrams which are used but in this volume some of the diagrams are inaccurate, many are rather child-like and some photographs appear on more than one occasion with different titles. The juxtaposition of certain photographs such as one of the eyes showing a left dilated pupil described as due to intra-cranial haemorrhage next to one showing eyes with a right dilated pupil being due to sub-dural haematoma will serve only to infuriate those with medical knowledge and confuse those without it. The precise reasons for showing a radial, an ulnar and a medial nerve palsy without explanation but as indicative of the flaccid weakness of stroke seem difficult to understand and the fact that in the section on radiology of vascular disease there are three skull radiographs, the first of which shows an enlarged pituitary fossa and the other two a sphenoidal wing meningioma seems inappropriate. In short one is left with the impression that the volume has provided the author with an opportunity to reproduce his collection of slides without too much thought as to the content.

The sections on physiotherapy, speech therapy and rehabilitation at the end of the