half of this century is that many submitted papers of this nature have the stuffing knocked out of them by revision at the behest of referees. Be that as it may, conference reports, which is what this book is, under a fancy title, often cry out for peer review or drastic editing. In this case the problem is compounded by the absence of any unifying theme.

In conclusion, therefore not a book I would recommend, certainly not to neurologists, and psychiatrists would find more meat in a random issue of a general psychiatric journal.

JC CUTTING

Neurological Complications of Renal Disease. By C F BOLTON AND G B YOUNG. (Pp 256; Price: £50.00.) Guildford: Butterworth Scientific Ltd, 1990. ISBN 0-409-95139-0

The two authors are clinical neurologists based in London, Ontario; Charles Bolton specialises in electromyography and Bryan Young in electroencephalography. Both work in collaboration with the haemodialysis service in their hospital and clearly have long and expert knowledge of their subject. The text is conveniently divided into firstly the scientific background including clinical assessment. Secondly, the largest section covers uraemic encephalopathy and neuropathy. Finally, the various neurological complications of dialysis, particularly dialysis dementia, are described. There is an interesting historical introduction which includes the information that Richard Bright in 1831 published a 2-volume work on the nervous system.

The sections on uraemic neuropathy and encephalopathy are extremely detailed running to 75 pages. I did not previously appreciate the complex aetiology of the carpal tunnel syndrome in uraemia and the authors discuss, amongst other causes, the role of the forearm fistula in haemodialysed patients and the role of amyloid. Efficient haemodialysis services are changing the neurological complications of renal disease and both uraemic polyneuropathy and encephalopathy are becoming increasingly rare. Although this is gratifying in one sense it unfortunately diminishes the usefulness of these chapters. The excellent section on dialysis dementia presents the same difficulty. Ten years ago the problem was much more common but now it is becoming rare due to greater understanding of the disorder and the effective removal of aluminium from the dialysate.

A problem with a text covering all neurological complications of renal disease is to decide on the degree of detail required for different topics and also on the choice of the proposed complications. For instance there is the rather dubious inclusion of ischaemic strokes, lacunes and Binswanger's disease on the grounds presumably that hypertension due to renal disease can be a precipitating cause. The detailed inclusion of central pontine myelinolysis and Wernicke's encephalopathy is more useful although both complications must be rare. Central nervous system infection following renal transplantation and immunosuppression is described and is clearly important.

There is no question that this is and will remain an excellent reference source for neurologists. The authors and publishers have produced a clear and readable text.

NIGEL HYMAN

Vascular Brain Stem Diseases: Workshop on Vascular Brain Stem Diseases, Gutersloh, September 1988. Edited by B HOFFERBERTH, G G BRUNE, G SITZER, H-D WEGER. (Pp 281; Price: sFr 80.00; DM 96.00; £33.40; US\$ 53.50.) Basel: Karger, 1990. ISBN 3-8055-5031-6

The Bertelsmann Foundation organised an International workshop on Vascular Brain Stem Diseases in Gutersloh in September of 1988. The papers from the meeting are published in this volume and provide a patchy review of the anatomy, epidemiology, investigation and therapy of brain stem diseases. The anatomy of the brain stem is described in the first paper in considerable detail, yet there is not a single diagram. Relevant diagrams are referenced from other publications which detracts significantly from the text. Similarly in the second paper the vascular supply of the brain stem is described but diagrams are little used, and the most comprehensive detail on vascular anatomy is provided in one of the papers in epidemiology, and therefore some considerable distance away from the relevant text.

The section on Epidemiology is more useful though there are considerable discrepancies between the frequency of the different symptoms and signs in papers by different authors. A useful review of the signs and symptoms of the eponymous vascular brain stem syndromes is provided. Almost half of the volume relates to the use of diagnostic tools for investigating patients with vascular disease of the brain stem, and ranges from the standard neuro-otological techniques—including electronystagmography, and brain stem evoked responses—through the use of ultrasound to the most controversial techniques of posturography and hemorheology. The problem is that techniques such as posturography, which are not well validated, are described by proponents of the technique whose evaluation of the results, though positive, is uncritical.

The final section of the book deals with potential therapy in posterior circulation ischaemia, and covers the use of physical exercise programmes, the role of medical therapy, explores the possibility of thrombolysis and assesses the possible role of surgery.

Overall the book provides several interesting insights into problems with the posterior circulation, but there is much that is already published in standard neurological texts, and relatively little which is new.

DAVID BATES

Neuro-Oncology: Primary Malignant Brain Tumours. Edited by D G T THOMAS. (Pp 303; Price: £50.) Sevenoaks, Edward Arnold, 1990. ISBN 0-7131-4586-2.

For the clinician who is not familiar with progress in laboratory fields, and for the laboratory worker who is not dealing with patients, it is equally difficult to grasp the direction of progress, if there is any, in primary malignant brain tumours. This relatively short and competitively priced book (£50.00) attempts to bring together the two sides of the house, which is so essential if patients are to benefit from, rather than suffer from, so called therapeutic advances. It may also help to bring home to the laboratory

worker that a shorter life may sometimes be more acceptable than a longer one, plagued by the complications of ill-designed and poorly controlled therapeutic trials.

Inevitably the subjects reflect the particular research interests of the contributors. Although the depth is certainly far greater than the "jobbing" neurologist or neurosurgeon will need, it does provide useful summaries in those fields for those who are contemplating expanding or changing their current research interests. The contributors are British (16), American (5) and Swedish (4). The first five chapters cover laboratory work including in vitro biology, oncogene expression, growth factors, and experimental tumours. These chapters clarify recent advances and have full bibliographies. The chapter on the classification of tumours, which is so essential in the management of patients and the assessment of results, places the WHO system in context. It forms a useful bridge between the laboratory and the more clinical sections of the book. The chapters on imaging and in vivo metabolism, including positron emission tomography are excellent. Those on radiotherapy, chemotherapy and biological response modifier therapies (immunological and non immunological) are valuable reference texts, especially for clinicians not familiar with those subjects.

My major criticism is that the chapters on clinical presentation may be sufficient for the non clinician or for the general physician, but they merit greater depth and more selection if the book is to achieve a more uniform standard. It is also a pity that although a chapter is allotted to stereotactic methods, mainly of biopsy, the every day problem of "conventional" or excisional surgery are not addressed at all. If attitudes to this have changed in the light of other "advances" (which may or may not be the case), the reasons for a change should have been clarified.

In summary this multi-disciplinary book can be firmly recommended. My reservation is that it fails to give clear guidance in fields, which although controversial, are nevertheless essential in making every day decisions. Perhaps it is that the expert in depth is ultimately more confused than those, who, from afar, can see only the important sign posts.

JOHN GARFIELD

Developmental Speech Disorders. Clinical Issues and Practical Implications. Edited by PAMELA GRUNWELL. (Pp 187. Illustrated; Price: £19.95.) Edinburgh: Churchill Livingstone, 1990. ISBN 0-443-03992-5

This update of Muriel Morley's book *The Development and Disorders of Speech in Children* (1957) discusses current clinical issues and clearly establishes its aim of "setting clinical practice firmly in a theoretical framework." The contributors are all clinicians in current practice, so the book chapters are both topical and thought-provoking. The newer fields of phonology and clinical linguistics are well represented and there is an emphasis on the impact of these newer fields to the overall understanding of children's problems in "learning to pronounce."

The book has a clear layout in three sections: the first, a theoretical section discussing issues in speech development and speech disorders; the second, a more practical section