perspective. I am glad to see mental handicap given some space, but surely some aspects of mental handicap deserve much more detailed coverage than this, particularly the Fragile X syndrome. It is time biological psychiatrists and neuroscientists gave more attention to the neglected but scientifically enormously rich field of mental retardation.

Other topics covered in this volume include the oft-reviewed molecular genetics with relation to the major psychoses, tau protein phosphorylation in Alzheimer's disease, cytoarchitectonic and developmental studies of schizophrenia, the use of antibodies to detect protein differences between normal and schizophrenic brains, neurotrophins and neurodegenerative diseases, neuroendocrine testing, clinicopathological aspects of HIV, and the applications of magnetic resonance spectroscopy in psychiatry.

I have enjoyed this book and yet I have reservations about the whole series in terms of its aims and targeted audience. However good they are, books such as this have serious limitations: in fast moving areas of science, reviews are out of date before the book comes off the press. An expert reader will know that a particular hard copy text has a very short shelf life, but the average psychiatrist, both trainee and trainer, will be misled by a cover note that promises comprehensive and up-to-date reviews. The latter readership will also find the technical language very hard going and will probably give up. Digestible information for non-experts needs another style, and I doubt that it is realistic to expect one format to double for experts and non-experts alike. Active researchers, on the other hand, might refer to a volume like this for a key reference, but will really get their information from journals, the scientific grapevine and, where available, rapidly updated electronic online databases. The time has come for publishers who aim to serve the scientific community to follow the example of their authors by exploiting the new technologies and develop networked electronic publishing.

ELEANOR FELDMAN

Handbook for Dementing Illnesses. Edited by JOHN C MORRIS. (Pp 688; Illustrated; Price: \$175.00). 1993. New York, Marcel Dekker Inc, ISBN 0-8247-8837-0.

With an ever ageing population, dementing illness continues to expand as a neurological subspecialty. Although treatable causes of dementia have long been recognised, drug treatments for major neurodegenerative illness such as Alzheimer's disease are imminent. Thus classifying the type of dementia is no longer of merely academic interest, but is of clinical and therapeutic importance. This multi-author American text aims to present a comprehensive account of the field.

The initial section is an overview of the dementias in general. There are good introductory chapters on the role of epidemiology, neuropsychology, structural and functional imaging, and pathology in

dementia research. The chapter on evaluating the demented patient will be of practical use to the neurologist.

The bulk of the text addresses the various diseases which cause dementia. For most conditions, pathology, clinical features, investigation and treatment are addressed, as in the chapter on AIDS dementia. However, there is some variability in this approach; the hydrocephalus chapter addresses clinical issues, while the non-Alzheimer degenerative dementia chapter is largely neuropathological. The section on Alzheimer's disease is disappointingly brief, shorter than that on dementia in Down syndrome for example. However, the chapters on extrapyramidal dementias, ischaemic vascular dementia and the infectious cerebral amyloidoses are particularly good, and the overall standard is very high.

Advice on management of the demented patient concludes the book. Behavioural problems are well covered, and there is a comprehensive account of potential pharmacological means of treating dementias, such as tacrine for Alzheimer's disease. A final chapter on future developments concentrates on genetics, pathogenesis, diagnostic methods and pharmacotherapy.

The text is comprehensively referenced, with plentiful pathological illustrations. Basic science and clinical features are well blended, although a minor carp might be that clinical aspects are not covered quite as extensively as pathology. That aside, the neurologist or psychiatrist with an interest in dementia will find much of value in this book.

JOHN GREENE

Unilateral Neglect: Clinical and Experimental Studies. Edited by I H ROBERTSON AND JOHN C MARSHALL (Pp 351; Price: £29.95). 1993. Hove, Lawrence Erlbaum Associates. ISBN 0-86377-208-0.

This is a timely book. Neglect was first definitely described by Brain in 1941, preceded by sporadic, unsystematised references to it from the 1890s onwards. In the subsequent 40 years, however, nothing much was added to the core knowledge that neglect was usually for the left field of vision and due to right hemisphere damage.

This book demonstrates that neglect is much more mysterious and complex than hitherto appreciated. In the past fifteen years, a whole host of observations have been published, showing that "there is no such entity as neglect, although many patients with right hemisphere lesions have perceptual, attentional, representational or intentional problems in dealing with 'left space'". Just as "aphasia" is shorthand for a number of language problems in someone with a left hemisphere lesion, they argue that neglect is an umbrella term for numerous disparate spatial disorders.

Some of the more curious facts about neglect to be uncovered are the following. If a native of Milan, with neglect, is asked to imagine himself standing at the southern end of the Piazza del Duomo, and asked to list the buildings to either side of him, he will omit those to the west. If he is then asked to imagine himself at the northern

end, facing south, he will omit those to the east. If someone with neglect is shown a picture of a normal house in his right field and a picture of a house, the left half of which is in flames, in his left field, he will say that the two houses are identical; if asked to say which house he would rather live in, however, he will choose the house in his right field.

The various contributors mostly try to explain the new knowledge by one of a handful of theories, each with a different emphasis on the way spatial attention is distributed in normals. The most plausible of these is outlined by Kinsbourne. He believes that there is a normal attentional bias to the extreme right of the right visual field. In a subject with neglect this bias is accentuated with the result that objects become attenuated and then obliterated as gaze moves leftwards. There are problems with this explanation, notably its failure to account for imagery effects such as the Piazza del Duomo phenomenon, and that neglect can occur for the left half of an object in the right visual field, even though things further to the left are still recognised.

Altogether this is a fascinating book of which I have no criticisms. It is relatively cheap for a hardback, and well edited.

JOHN CUTTING

Neurological Rehabilitation. Edited by R GREENWOOD, MP BARNES, TM MCMILLAN AND CD WARD. (Pp 640; Illustrated; Price: £89.50). 1993. Edinburgh, Churchill Livingstone. ISBN 0-443-04287X.

Despite the development of rehabilitation medicine as a speciality in itself, much of the on-going care of neurological disability is provided by the neurologist, neurosurgeon or general medical colleagues. These providers of chronic long-term care are generally untrained in this discipline. They have little or no concept of such fundamentals as the measurement of disability, the proper usage of therapists, the behavioural and cognitive disturbances of chronic illness and the management of specific problems such as pain, bladder and sexual dysfunction. It is to these clinicians that this excellent and long overdue textbook is directed.

In the foreword and preface, it is stated that some two percent of the population are handicapped or disabled through neurological disease and that increasingly neurological specialists, whose traditional role is one of diagnosis and immediate management, are expected to advise and care for such persons. This book provides an outstanding reference text for such purposes. The editors have drawn about them a diverse, distinguished, multi-disciplinary group of contributors from throughout the United Kingdom. The text is divided into three sections. The first deals with the principles of neurological rehabilitation dealing with the epidemiology of disease, the organisation of rehabilitation services, social and ethical implications and mechanisms of restorative and adaptive recovery. The second section deals with the measurement and assessment of disability embracing not just physical but also cognitive and behav-