the investigation of many cerebral disorders. PET's expense and limited availability restrict its use to research. The advent of SPECT, however, allows functional imaging to be provided as a clinical service in most neurological centres. Indeed, one might advocate that investigation of cerebral pathology is not complete without both structural and functional imaging. This upsurge of interest in SPECT is reflected by the second edition of this multi-author American text.

The first section is a general overview, including technical aspects. There are useful sections on correlating SPECT images with both structural anatomy and neuropsychological function.

The bulk of the text takes a disease-oriented approach, focusing on cerebrovascular disease, dementia, epilepsy, trauma, psychiatric and other conditions. Each chapter starts with a brief summary of the use of SPECT in the field. However, most of the chapter comprises selected cases in which the clinical history is matched with the relevant SPECT scan, accompanied by a teaching point.

Only a few of the images display the current state-of-the-art resolution now possible with SPECT. However, the bulk of the images are representative of those provided by the typical nuclear medicine department, and hence are of practical benefit to the clinician.

This is an excellent introduction to SPECT imaging, and will be of use to the clinical neurologist. Rather than representing the cutting edge of SPECT research, it is more of a practical clinical aid which will not only help clinicians understand SPECT images, but also inform them of SPECT's potential as a clinical tool.

JOHN DW GREENE

Magnetic Resonance Scanning and Epilepsy. Edited by S D SHORVON, D R FISH, F ANDERMANN, G M BYDDER and H STEFAN. (Pp 323 $95). Published by Plenum Press, New York 1994. ISBN 0-306-44735-5.

No one can doubt the already substantial impact of magnetic resonance technology in the field of epilepsy or its enormous potential for the future. Within a very short period of time MR imaging has established itself as the method of choice for the investigation of people with epilepsy and an essential part of pre-surgical evaluation. As yet, we are only at the beginning of development in the fields of spectroscopy, volumetry and MR studies of brain activation, all of which could further both our understanding of the basic mechanisms of the epilepsies and their clinical management. A volume covering this area, therefore, should be welcome and timely.

The aim of the book is to review the current position of MR imaging and spectroscopy in epilepsy, to summarise current research, and to indicate the likely direction of future research. It contains no less than 53 separate contributions within 300 pages, a fact that illustrates that many of these are extremely short, superficial, and repetitive of one another. The book is divided into introductory chapters, and sections on imaging in temporal lobe epilepsy, on cortical dysgenesis, on correlative techniques with other investigations, on MR in lesional epilepsy syndromes, and on MR spectroscopy.

Whilst there are some worthwhile contributions within the plethora of articles, the reader is left with the impression that the volume has been thrown together rapidly without much consideration for a coherent overall strategy or the fine detail of the contributions. The volume emphasises that the publication of the proceedings of symposia rarely come together to form a very worthwhile publication. It may well be that the discussions that took place within the workshop sponsored by the NATO science committee were worthwhile and stimulating for the participants. However, they seem to have been unwilling to give too much thought to those manuscripts that they were told, I am sure, to bring with them to the meeting in order to have their expenses paid!

Readers in the area will, I am sure, be best advised to await the publication of a more satisfactory volume for which there remains a considerable need.

DAVID CHADWICK

Motor Development in Children. Edited by E FEDRIZZI, G ANANZINI and P CRENNA. (Pp 185 £32). Published by John Libbey and Co, London 1994. ISBN 0-86196-448-9.

Take any traditional neuropaediatric tome from its shelf and you will find an opening chapter on the examination of the developing child. Its point of departure will be a complex series of primitive reflexes, on the unspoken assumption that these direct the newborn's activity. This view is changing, and I read this monograph, the result of a postgraduate teaching course in Milan in 1993, with some excitement.

Neurological prognosis has been difficult in the neonate, partly because of our reliance on interpretation of reflexes and their rate of disappearance. But it is argued persuasively in Chapter 2 that the assessment by eye (and video) of the quality of a new baby's movements in fact allows early and accurate prediction.

This is refreshing as is the general view that a baby's motor activities are not just defective adult ones. Some chapters persist in extrapolating from damaged adult brains in their interpretation of developing motor systems, but for the most part the book stresses that a child's motor behaviours are superbly adapted for its needs at different stages of life. This theme runs through chapters on reaching, grasping, fine motor skills, posture, balance, visual development and more.

There is valuable information in this book and the opening chapter is one of the best accounts that I have seen of the embryology of the brain. But the quality is variable. Some chapters are clear while others are difficult to decipher; some are research papers, others review articles. There is repetition in the extensive coverage of vision. However, if you are inclined to dip, you will find much to interest you, and most of the book is very good.

REBECCA AYLWARD

Movement Control. Edited by PAUL CORDO AND STEVAN HARNAD. (Pp 275 £45). CUP 1994. ISBN 0-521-45241-4.

In the 17 years since it was founded, *Behavioral and Brain Sciences* has established a strong reputation as a peer commentary journal with topics ranging widely over the neurosciences. In 1992, the new direction was taken of devoting a whole issue of the journal to the first in a series of annual conferences on Controversies in Neuroscience. The conference, which actually took place two years earlier, had as its focus Movement Control and was organised around eight major target papers, each of which received a dozen or so short commentaries. Subsequently, the journal editor (Stevan Harnad) and conference organiser (Paul Cordo) decided to make the special issue available, with only minor modifications, as a separate publication.

The result is a book with the first quarter devoted to overviews of current issues by a number of leading researchers followed by nearly 100 commentaries by equally well-known scientists. The book concludes with short, integrative responses to the commentaries, which I found to be the best place to start reading. There follows a reference list with over 1500 entries, an author citation list (headed by Feldman's 1986 *Journal of Motor Behavior* paper—clearly approaching classic status), and an overly brief index.

In book form, this collection of papers will undoubtedly help disseminate important current ideas in motor control to a wider audience. The editors also suggest the book might be a useful graduate-level teaching text. I find this idea somewhat doubtful because: (1) the material is 4 years old (2) the coverage is not comprehensive (3) the regrouping of the commentaries separate from the target papers to which they refer makes it difficult to follow ideas through 'despite the editors' provision of a directory Table of Commentators (curiously buried in the middle of the book so that I initially missed it). Nor does the book strike me as of immediate clinical relevance. Nonetheless, given the low cost (with nearly 150 authors, the hardback price of £45 in the UK makes it a bargain at around 30 pence per author), it would seem appropriate to recommend this book on grounds of good value general interest reading.

ALAN WING

Molecular and Cell Biology of Neuropsychiatric Diseases. Edited by FRANK OWEN AND RUTH ITZHAKI. (Pp 201 £45). Published by Chapman and Hall, London 1993. ISBN 0-412-47800-5.

An understanding of the power of a molecular genetic approach to understanding both the aetiology of neurological disease and knowledge of the clinical applications of this information are becoming increasingly important for the practising neurologist and psychiatrist. As an introduction this book unfortunately, however, gives only limited help to those unfamiliar with the techniques, and misses the opportunity to