

acceptable, and doubtless were argued energetically at the symposium. Some restate propositions which have failed in the past to achieve general acceptance and the contributions from Swank and Jeames, the latter on hyperbaric oxygen are in this category.

Up to date aspects of supplementary diagnostic tests, including those which measure central conduction using magnetic stimulation and thalence of MRI imaging are well reviewed.

As someone whose interests are more clinically orientated in relation to this disease, I find critical evaluation of the section on immunologic and infective aspects is more difficult. For many like me an edited symposium would have given greater value to this volume.

It would be nice to think that after a long interest in this disease that I could see a faint if distant light at the end of the aetiologic tunnel. Despite our increasing sophistication in finding anomalies in various laboratory features, the primary defect still seems to elude us. It is good to see that so many people are stimulated to keep trying to solve this enigma.

While a purely clinical approach is unlikely to solve this problem, the basic scientist clearly still has to be reminded that this disease has a disconcerting tendency to stabilise or remit for reasons independent of the treatment offered.

This symposium includes representatives from a wide range of disciplines and this volume is a welcome and lively addition to the current high output on multiple sclerosis.

AW DOWNIE

**Computer Tomographic Imaging and Anatomic Correlation of the Human Brain.** By C Plets, A L Baert, G L Nijs, G Wilms. (Pp 111; \$71.50, £51.25.) Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1987.

This atlas, the latest of a series of radiological monographs from this publishing house, is the fruit of co-operation between four Belgian doctors who set out to illustrate the anatomy of the brain. The method they chose was to image the brains of two cadavers in axial and coronal planes, then to make postmortem slices of the brains approximating in thickness and direction to the CT technique and to photograph the coronal slices. Details are provided of the actual technique of postmortem fixing and slicing. However, the true value of the atlas

lies in 17 coronal slices of the cadaver brains which are portrayed by annotated post-mortem photographs placed side-by-side with the appropriate CT cuts; and the 15 annotated axial cuts, each of which is flanked by a line drawing to indicate the slice level. These plates occupy 82 pages of the 111 of the book. Considerable didactic benefit accrues to the reader who studies their captions. Brevity is such a blessing in this field; any book lighter than a brick is immediately attractive.

Unfortunately the atlas has defects. Judged by the appearances of other comparable books recently published, the quality of the CT scans is sub-standard: 10 years ago, perhaps they would have found acceptance, but now no longer. Similarly, the photographs of the postmortem slices are very poor. Somewhat less fundamental an objection but an irritation no less real, is the stilted language and grammatical imperfection of the text, which clearly was prepared by someone not conversant with accepted medical English. The high British retail cost of this slim volume, amounting to 50p a page, must surely set a new record price for medical monographs.

EH BURROWS

**Epilepsy.** Edited by Anthony Hopkins. (Pp 650; \$62.50.) New York: Demos Publications, 1987.

This excellent new text book is an important addition to the literature on epilepsy. It is intended for "general" and resident neurologists. It fills the need for a coherent guide to epilepsy while at the same time being easy to read.

The book is divided into 20 chapters and has 22 contributors. However, it is a welcome relief from the many multi-author books on epilepsy that have been produced following conferences. The subject matter has been carefully chosen by the editor in order to provide a sequence leading from epidemiology, through the basic mechanisms, to the clinical management and social consequences of epilepsy. The difference in styles of each contributor is evident in the formulation of this text but overall it is well written. Frequent sub-headings are used which makes information readily accessible if the book is used as a reference source. The references are comprehensive (over 1700), and surprisingly up to date, with important work from 1986 and occasionally 1987 included.

Given the limited length of the book there is a reasonable amount of discussion on each topic. Where appropriate different studies are compared. For example, the problems of interpreting different epidemiological studies are well covered, and would prepare the reader to assess the value of future surveys.

Direct practical advice is available on most clinical problems. For example, a step-by-step regime is given for the treatment of status epilepticus, although this clearly has a North American bias. The description of how to use heminevrin is unhelpful.

Overall, the illustrations are of good quality and readily understood. Unfortunately the reproduction of some EEGs is less than perfect and I hope that the publishers will rectify this in future editions.

Only occasionally did the disparate views of the different contributors surface. This occurred in the discussion of pseudo seizures which were dealt with in several chapters. A more unified approach to this difficult clinical problem might have been of practical help to the reader.

I have no hesitation in recommending this book to anyone who deals with patients suffering from epilepsy. It is easy to read, while at the same time providing a coherent guide to epilepsy.

D FISH

## Notices

**International Society for Adolescent Psychiatry.** The 2nd International Congress will be held in Geneva 10-13 July 1988. Information may be obtained from Christiane Bowen, PO Box 50, 1211 Geneva 8, Switzerland.

**International Congress on Epidural Spinal Cord Stimulation.** The First Congress will be held 1-3 June 1989 in Groningen, The Netherlands. Information may be obtained from QLT/Congrex, Keizersgracht 792, 1017 EC Amsterdam, The Netherlands.

## Correction

"The neurological practice of a district general hospital". On page 1401 of *J Neurol Neurosurg Psychiatry* 1987 Vol 50 a line was omitted at the head of the page. The sentence should have read "Should the post of physician with an interest in neurology be created for every district hospital?"