Book reviews


Lumps and bumps on the head have attracted laymen and doctors alike from time immemorial. Doctor Perou is a pathologist whose interest was aroused by the wide variety of skull lesions encountered during routine necropsies on mentally retarded children and adults. In this book he brings together his observations on those showing hyperostosis, defined here simply as skull thickening. The author has wisely used other texts to produce a monograph which refers to all causes of skull thickening, including blood dyscrasias, infections, and tumours.

The principal interest of this book, however, is the author's careful pathological studies which have led him to differentiate between hyperostosis calvariae interna and hyperostosis calvariae diffusa. The former, of which hyperostosis frontalis interna is one variety, is essentially a dysplasia with heredity as a basic factor. He accepts the clinical syndrome of headache, mental and neurological disturbances, and endocrine imbalance, which is seen in some cases to a varying degree, but has as the common denominator the bony lesion. By contrast hyperostosis calvariae diffusa is a degenerative or dystrophic process. The discussion on osteomas concludes with the feeling that most of them arise from developmental defects; extrinsic causes are the exception rather than the rule and a few may be true tumours.

It is a pleasure to welcome this book which contains much that will be useful to the clinician as well as to the pathologist. It is beautifully illustrated and produced and the extensive bibliography adds to its value as a source book for all interested in this field.


When the third edition of this work was reviewed here, it was welcomed as an excellent monograph which would be indispensable to those engaged in the treatment of accidents, and it was suggested that for a further edition a more extended account might be given of epilepsy following head injury. The eulogy continues to be well deserved, and the 20-page article now provided on post-traumatic epilepsy is an authoritative statement by Professor Earl Walker. Mr. Rowbotham has called to his aid a number of expert collaborators, most of them his associates in Newcastle. The book is appropriately now dedicated to the university of that city. New chapters deal with the history of head injury; the frequency with which it occurs in Great Britain; the reticular system, and its bearing on impaired consciousness; radiological and electro-encephalographic findings; the chapter on rehabilitation has been rewritten. The work is so comprehensive and detailed that most readers will echo Professor Norman Dott's comment that this is the British textbook on head injuries; it would, however, gain by fuller consideration of the psychological aspects.


The subject matter of this excellent book falls into three sections. First, there is a description of the epidemiological methods which are being applied to the study of multiple sclerosis and a valuable account of the results so far obtained by Dr. Acheson. The second section contains the fruits of Dr. McAlpine's life-long interest in the clinical features of this disease and is a gold-mine of information. In the third section Professor Lumsden has deliberately ignored the morbid anatomy of this condition, descriptions of which can be found elsewhere, and devoted his entire attention to the clinical pathology. His accounts of the limitations of methods of estimating proteins of the cerebrospinal fluid, the significance of changes found, and current concepts of the immunology of the disease will be invaluable to clinicians.

There is an exhaustive list of references to each section and there can be no doubt that this book will be a standard work for reading and reference for a long time to come.


This book is now a classic, the first English edition having come out in 1921, and its continued success speaks for its usefulness.

In this edition the major work of revision has been carried out by Professor Refsum, with the help of some notes of the late Professor Monrad-Krohn. It is a remarkably full and up-to-date guide to the examination of the nervous system and no neurologist in training should fail to read it. It is full of common sense and informed by experience and a quite clear, painstaking attention to detail in the elicitation and evaluation of physical signs. As we all know from our own experience the elicitation of physical signs is not always an easy task but the difficulties lessen with practice and this book will help in the process. It might be even more valuable if the book were in a more portable form and available for easy reference, and for future editions Professor Refsum and the publishers might bear this in mind.

In addition to the clinical chapters, there are useful sections devoted to the cerebrospinal fluid, radiology, and, very briefly, to applied electrophysiology.

This general textbook starts with a useful description of examination of the nervous system in relation to development, and continues with chapters by different authors covering all fields of neurological disease in childhood, including metabolic defects and head injury in some detail. The range of subjects described is wide, with inevitable sacrifice of detail, but a good bibliography is appended to each chapter. Clinical description and differential diagnosis are uniformly good, and many tables summarize much information.

This book is recommended as an excellent up-to-date survey of a rapidly growing subject.


The author of this small book has himself contributed significantly to the subject in the past five years, and has thoroughly mastered the literature. He has now brought together the large amount of rather scattered work on the theme of cerebrovascular disease and presented it with some critical assessment. The result is a valuable contribution, made more useful by discussions on the pathology of the conditions by Professor Crawford and Dr. Crompton. Not all will agree with all the conclusions, but reference to the sources is given for those who wish to re-assess for themselves. One of the special values of the book is that it is written by a practising neurologist. The subject is one which lies on the borderland of neurology, cardiovascular disease, and that fast vanishing entity 'general medicine'. The neurological viewpoint will therefore of itself provide fresh insights to some of those practically concerned in the subject. It can be recommended to all those having the care of patients with cerebrovascular disease, especially perhaps to geriatricians, and as a modern résumé of the subject for more senior medical students.


In this monograph the author proposes a mechanism for the action of ionizing irradiations on aerobic organisms, which he calls the CU (I, II)-peroxide theory. It is postulated that such irradiation leads to the production of organic peroxides which cause damage not only to nuclei, but also to oxidative processes in the cell cytoplasm mediated by copper-containing enzymes. Since copper plays such a central part in this theory several chapters are devoted to a discussion of the chemistry of copper; a detailed account is given of its importance in biological systems such as cytochrome oxidase, caeruloplasmin, and other copper-containing proteins.

In a section on the clinical aspects, new ideas on the role of copper in the pathogenesis of Wilson's disease are presented, involving the inhibitory effects of high tissue copper levels on mitochondrial enzymes: the bearing of this concept upon treatment of the disease with chelating agents is discussed. An excellent account is given of the effects of radiation on metallo-proteins and of the biological results of peroxide formation in tissues. Other chapters deal with theories of radioprotection, the role of chemical reagents, such as cyanide and G-H compounds, and variations in metabolic state, which are discussed in detail.

The book gives a clear and comprehensive review of a complex subject. It includes much useful data and an extensive bibliography, and will be valuable to biochemists interested in radiation effects, and also to those concerned with other aspects of copper in biological systems.


The eight chapters in the latest volume of this series comprise six from the United States, one from this country, and one from Sweden, and this, I suspect, reflects the relative interest in this subject in the New World and the Old. There are five review articles covering the pathology of cerebral protein metabolism; the blood-brain barrier; monoamine oxidase inhibitors (this unfortunately includes no mention of that fascinating phenomenon the 'cheese reaction'); the phenothiazine tranquillizers; and comments on the use of symptom rating scales. In addition to the review articles there are three research articles on 'Micro-iontophoretic studies on cortical neurones', 'Responses from the visual cortex of unanaesthetized monkeys', and 'Multiple molecular forms of brain hydrolases', the first of these being a particularly fascinating account of the microtechniques which are now available for studying the behaviour of single neurones in the cortex.


The large amount of information presented concisely and with unusual clarity makes this book not only highly suitable for those taking advanced examinations in pathology but also for the practising physician who needs an up-to-date source of reference. Apart from matters of detail there are very helpful discussions of a basic scientific character. A new chapter on microbial genetics has been added and the section in diagnostic medical microbiology has been rewriten. The account of virology has been brought up to date and will be of special interest to neurologists. Stress is laid throughout on practical aspects of clinical infections and chemotherapy.

R. M. Norman

TAY-SACHS' DISEASE. Edited by Bruno W. Volk. (Pp. viii + 158; illustrated. $5.75.) New York: Grune and Stratton Inc. 1964.

This monograph, by four authors, covers the history, the clinical features, pathology, biochemistry, and epidemiology of Tay-Sachs disease, with extensive bibliographies. It contains a great deal of information and is embellished with some beautiful electronmicrographs and histochemical preparations. It is odd that the
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