work reported in the published proceedings of the two
previous symposia on Current Research in Muscular
Dystrophy organized by the Muscular Dystrophy Group
of Great Britain and held in 1963 and 1965 respectively.
The increased size of this volume, in which the pro-
ceedings of the fourth symposium held in January 1968
are reported, pays testimony to the increased volume of
work in this field now being undertaken in Great Britain.

The volume opens with the Joan Vincent Memorial
Lecture, given by the Chairman of the Group, Professor
F. J. Nattrass, in which he describes historical develop-
ments in medical knowledge concerning the muscular
dystrophies and related disorders, and goes on to relate
the remarkable progress made by the Muscular Dystro-
phy Group of Great Britain since its inception. The
remainder of the volume describes the contributions of
individual research workers supported by financial aid
from the Group. It is packed with valuable facts and
information and full of useful references to the recent
literature. Unfortunately some of the photographic
reproductions have probably suffered as a result of the
rapid off-print process used in publication. Nevertheless,
the volume can be confidently recommended as giving an
invaluable survey of current research into muscle diseases
in Great Britain.

A CLINICAL STUDY OF MIGRAINE WITH PARTICULAR
REFERENCE TO THE MOST SEVERE CASES By Axel Klee.
(Pp. xv + 190; illustrated. Danish Kroner 50.00.)
Munksgaard: Copenhagen. 1968. (Partly in English
and partly in Danish.)

This monograph reviews 150 cases of migraine, 50 seen
personally by the author. For inclusion in the study,
migraine is taken to be ‘paroxysmal headache accom-
panied by marked discomfort’. ‘Severity’ both of indi-
vidual attacks and of the disorder as a whole is defined:
duration of attack seems to be the main criterion in
each case. Correlations between severity and a number of
features of migraine are then made. In general, the
rather diffuse definition of migraine and of severity
casts some doubt on the value of this study. However,
the book records a number of interesting points in the
semiology of migraine, though they are not easy to
find.

C. W. M. WHITTY

NEUROLOGY: A CONCISE CLINICAL TEXTBOOK By Joseph A.
Luhan. (Pp. viii + 526; illustrated. £6.) Williams &
Wilkins: Baltimore. (Edinburgh agents: E. & S.
Livingstone.) 1968.

This textbook is intended to cover the needs of medical
students and residents, although its size—over 500 pages
—hardly accords with its author’s description of it as a
succinct orientation. The first section is a general con-
sideration of the functional organization of the nervous
system and of common symptoms and signs. It is ad-
mirable in conception, but the result may, in places, be
a disappointment to the well-informed student of
physiological knowledge. The author’s approach is
traditional, didactic, and descriptive. The function of the
muscle spindles in the regulation of the muscle tone is
discussed in a few lines and there is confusion over
conscious projection of proprioceptive sensation from
muscle. The remainder of the book follows traditional
lines. There is an excellent anatomical supplement of
coronal brain slices and Weigert-stained sections of
brain-stem which are models of clarity. The systematic
descriptions of nervous system disorders are clearly set
out and the illustrations, both clinical and pathological,
are of excellent quality. The approach to drug therapy
is practical and helpful and an unusual and informative
chapter deals with neurological aspects of general
medical conditions. The final pages are devoted to an
index of rare syndromes with a short description of each.
This is a riot of eponyms and is enough to deter the most
stout-hearted student. It contains everything from Avellis
syndrome to Fothergill’s neuralgia and Kojernikoff’s
epilepsy, but there is no mention of writer’s cramp.

R. W. ROSS RUSSELL

BACKGROUND TO MIGRAINE Edited by R. Smith. (Pp. 160;
illustrated. 36x.) William Heinemann Medical Books:

This book records the proceedings of the First Migraine
Symposium held at the National Hospital, Queen Square,
November 1966. It contains a foreword by the Minister
of Health, a history of migraine by Dr. Maedonald
Critchley, and a series of papers on the radiological
investigation and electroencephalography of migraine,
the cerebral circulation, the relation of the hypothalamus
to migraine, and biochemical aspects of the subject. The
object of the Symposium was to encourage research into
the possible anatomical, physiological, and pharmaeco-
logical mechanisms involved in the migraine attack. It is
extraordinary that so little is known of the aetiology of an
ailment which afflicts so many and of which the clinical
aspects have been so thoroughly described over the
centuries. Theories and opinions abound. There is still no
agreement on the question of the personality of the
migraine subject. It is hoped that intensive biochemical
study of patients before, during, and after an attack, will
throw some light on its causation. Epidemiological
surveys of a condition which has still to be defined must
have limited value.

The vascular hypothesis, which is generally accepted,
began 40 years ago with the report of the efficacy of
ergotamine tartrate in the relief of the disorder. The
metabolism of vasoactive substances and their action on
receptor sites is a line of research which is being pursued.

J. D. SPILLANE

MÉCANISMES CÉRÉBRAUX DU LANGAGE By R. Husson.
(Pp. 60; illustrated). L’Expansion Scientifique Fran-

The author of this monograph attempts an explanation of
the cerebral mechanisms of language, based on Bar-
bizet’s concept of the neuronal metacircuit and Hyden’s
RNA studies. He has analysed language processes
according to semantic background, modality, and motor
response; and has then postulated a number of theor-
etical systems which might control language behaviour.
The scheme is coherent and stimulating; it has more
BACKGROUND TO MIGRAINE

J. D. Spillane

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