

depressive phase in retreat in San Remo. The Nobel prize was to come later. We read of the great Bekhterev, the first neurologist in Russia, but also a general and a political radical. Ljunggren tells how Bekhterev recognised a variant of ankylosing spondylitis, how he fell out with Pavlov and how he was probably fatally poisoned by Stalin. There is a touching essay on Cushing, his famous operations on General Wood and of his lifelong friendship with the famous explorer Sven Hedin.

The sad illness of George Gershwin and the case of the sleepy Sea Lord end this engaging work, leaving the reader wanting more. Can you resist this elegant paperback?

J M S PEARCE

**Neurophysiology.** 2nd Edition Physiological Principles of Medicine Series. By R H S CARPENTER. (Pp 387; Price £17.95.) Sevenoaks: Edward Arnold, 1990. ISBN 0-340-50634-2.

This book is published as a companion volume to *Clinical Neurology* by C D Marsden and T J Fowler. The monograph consists of fourteen chapters with a list at the end of the book with references and further reading. The chapters contain a number of diagrams and a few tables. The material is well presented; however the close set type makes it somewhat difficult and tiring to read. The material presented contains the broad range of neurophysiological knowledge for the student, including special senses, postural mechanisms and motor control.

On the first page the author writes "This book is about trying to understand the brain". The author has generally succeeded in this introductory text which provides a good overview of neurophysiology. The book is a useful volume for the student. The references are somewhat old although the suggested reading lists are somewhat more modern.

M S SCHWARTZ

**Chronic Epilepsy, Its Prognosis and Management.** Edited by M R TRIMBLE. (Pp 260; Price £38.50.) Chichester: John Wiley & Sons Ltd, 1989. ISBN 0-471-92464-4.

It is now well recognised that epilepsy is a heterogenous disorder, not only in its phenomenology and aetiology but also in its prognosis. The majority of patients with seizure disorders will enter long-term remission shortly after the onset of their seizures but unfortunately 20% or 30% of patients have a chronic epilepsy often demanding life-long therapy and being associated with significant psychosocial handicap. Inevitably, such patients tend to gravitate towards neurology clinics where they make up a large part of neurological practice.

This is a multi-author book and whilst it is not stated clearly anywhere in the book that this is the case, one suspects that the authors have been invited to speak at a symposium and asked to bring the manuscript with them to contribute to this publication! This approach inevitably means that the content of many of the chapters in the book are available elsewhere often in rather fuller, better bal-

anced format. Some chapters will be of use to the general neurologist, including that on the EEG in chronic epilepsy, and that on the pathophysiology of chronic epilepsy.

The overall format of the book lacks balance and whilst the first thirteen chapters all have some relevance to the title of the book, the next five chapters contain two related to benzodiazepines (which may reflect the acknowledged financial support from the pharmaceutical company), one dealing with epilepsy in developing countries and one with general review of genetics and the potential application of the field of epilepsy.

It is doubtful that this book serves any significant purpose and neurologists seeking enlightenment on how to manage their patients with chronic epilepsy are likely to be somewhat disappointed. One suspects that the major aim of this publication is for it to be used as a promotional tool by a pharmaceutical company.

DAVID CHADWICK

**Migraine: A Spectrum of Ideas.** Edited by M SANDLER AND G COLLINS. (Pp 322; Price £35.00.) Oxford University Press, 1990. ISBN 0-19-261810-5.

This book contains the papers presented by the 25 participants at the Leeds Castle Migraine Workshop in 1988 and the accompanying discussion, apparently verbatim. To a veteran of Migraine Symposia it is disappointing and, to a migraineur, somewhat dismaying to find that the topics discussed have changed so little over the years. Merton Sandler, in his introduction, comments on the static nature of migraine research and the continuing lack of agreement. Thus, Lance and colleagues, in an excellent review of pathogenesis, strongly favour the neural origin of the symptoms of migraine, including the headache. This is balanced, however, by equally compelling claims by Humphrey for the role of 5HT receptors on extracerebral vessels. Despite decades of research there are remarkable gaps in our knowledge. Kathleen Merikangas points out that not a single study of the familial incidence of migraine has complied with accepted methodological standards. There is speculation on a central action of ergotamine but it transpires that nobody knows whether it penetrates the blood-brain barrier. Similar disagreements persist on the role of spreading cortical depression and of the changes in cerebral blood flow observed in classical but not in common migraine. That 5HT plays some part in the acute migraine attack is generally agreed, but not whether excess or deficiency is to blame.

In a book of this calibre a critical review of pharmacological treatment and of methods of assessment of results would have been welcome, rather than a statement of common practice. There is, throughout, an implicit or expressed belief that knowledge of the mode of action of drugs that appear to influence migraine will unravel its secrets. Ziegler casts doubt on this approach and, indeed, many have hoped that the reverse would be true and that the extensive research mostly ably reviewed and discussed here would lead to successful treatment.

This book presents a most interesting account of modern thought on migraine but provides few answers.

W B MATTHEWS

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## SHORT NOTICES

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**Psychoanalytic Terms and Concepts.** Edited by B E MOORE AND B D FINE. (Pp 210; Price £25.00, \$38.00.) 1990. London: Yale University Press. ISBN 0-300-04577-8.

**Journal of Neural Transmission Supplementum 29 Neurotransmitter Actions and Interactions.** Edited by MBH Youdim and KF Tipton (Pp 304; Price: DM 240.) Wien, Springer, Verlag 1990. ISBN 3-211-82142-2

**Back Pain—An International Review.** Edited by JK Paterson and L Burn (Pp 430; Price: Dfl. 249.00, US\$ 128.00, UK£ 70.00.) 1990. Dordrecht, Kluwer Academic Publishers Group. ISBN 0-7923-8912-3

**Mutism. Studies in Disorders of Communication.** By Y LEBRUN. (Pp 124; £18.50.) London, Whurr Publishers Ltd, 1990. ISBN 1-870332-55-5

**Psychological Medicine—20 years of Publication Vol. 20 No. 1 February 1990** Edited by MICHAEL SHEPHERD. (Pp 242; Price: Vol. £29.) Cambridge University Press 1990 ISSN 0033-29117.

This issue celebrates the Twentieth anniversary of this distinguished Journal under the editorship of Michael Shepherd. A good example of the bridge between neurology and psychological medicine, amongst other honours it has earned the review in the TLS. Readers of this Journal will not need further reminder of this scholarly publication.

**L'encephale: revue de psychiatrie biologique et thérapeutique Nouvelle Serie Vol. XVI Fascicule 1 Janvier-Fevrier 1990.** (Entirely French). (Pp 60; Price: Annual Subscription FF660.) Paris, ETIM, Annie Bloch.

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## NOTICES

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**Third International Symposium on Spina Bifida,** to be held in Chicago, Illinois, 7-9 November 1990. Further information from Joy Santiago, Children's Memorial Hospital, 2300 Children's Plaza, Box 28, Chicago, Illinois 60614, United States.

**Eighth International Symposium on Intracranial Pressure: ICP and Craniospinal Dynamics,** to be held in Rotterdam, 16-20 June 1991. Further information from Erasmus Congress Organisation, POB 1738, 3000 DR Rotterdam, The Netherlands.



## BOOK REVIEWS: Chronic Epilepsy, Its Prognosis and Management.

David Chadwick

*J Neurol Neurosurg Psychiatry* 1990 53: 724  
doi: 10.1136/jnp.53.8.724-a

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<http://jnp.bmj.com/content/53/8/724.2.citation>

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