Although this book contains useful information, apart from the use of surgery before scanning and intra-operative ultrasound, it does not make any other new management points. It is questionable whether it justifies a whole monograph, although it is reasonably priced at $40.00 U.S.

MICHAEL POWELL

Pain and Central Nervous System Disease: The Central Pain Syndromes. (The Bristol-Myers Squibb Symposium on Pain Research.) Edited by KENNETH L CASBY. (Pp 290; Price: $60.00.) New York, Raven Press. ISBN 0 88167 776 0.

In 1969, Cassinari and Pagni wrote the only monograph on central pain until the present book appeared. This book, an excellent account of developments since that time, comprises chapters from 26 authors who contributed to a Symposium on Central Pain held in Michigan in July 1990. The book is particularly important since the field covers numerous related topics which are spread widely in the scientific literature, and it is difficult to summarise the "state of the art", a task achieved here admirably.

The book is divided into sections comprising clinical aspects of central pain states: assessment, measurement and behavioural issues; anatomy and physiology relevant to central pain states; chemotherapeutics and pharmacology; and therapeutic aspects.

Certain problems recur throughout the book, for example, what precisely is central pain? This is no problem for post-stroke pain syndromes, but if, as is so amply discussed, widespread changes occur in the central nervous system following purely peripheral painful lesions, does separation of central and peripheral pain still make sense? Nevertheless, here is the place to find out about pain after strokes and spinal cord injury, about what happens in the spinal cord and thalamus in central pain, about denervation supersensitivity, neuronal plasticity, what the relevant pathways might be, what the most useful drugs and augmenting and ablative procedures are for helping these patients. And much more.

The contributions have been very well written and edited, the book is extremely up-to-date and inerratically produced.

GD SCHOTT


As the title implies, this book is predominantly an atlas of abnormal magnetic resonance images of the central nervous system. In many cases, comparable computed tomograms are included and some angiograms and even plain films are also illustrated. Many of the pathologies are histologically confirmed, though no specimens are illustrated. In conclusion, the denial that the disease is evident from the images alone; in others such as vascular diseases, confirmation is by other radiological studies.

The text is brief and at an elementary level. Short chapters deal with the basic principles of magnetic resonance and of normal and abnormal signal production; and, an anatomical atlas displaying normal sections of the brain and spine with labelled line drawings is included, though only the very major anatomical features are indicated.

Most of the common abnormalities indicated are included but the range of pathologies is by no means complete. In general the cases selected to illustrate a particular condition demonstrate the important and typical features on which the diagnosis depends. However, there is no listing of illustrations or line drawings in the book and many details visible on the illustrations do not receive any comment in the captions.

Most of the images were produced on an Hitachi 0.2 Tesla super-conducting system. With few exceptions, they are of good quality and are always adequate to demonstrate the pathology. There is a good bibliography but the latest references are from 1988. The book is at too elementary a level to be useful to neuroscientists. It is suitable for students and perhaps for general radiologists and physicians beginning to study the central nervous system. MRI but unfortunately, it is relatively expensive.

BRIAN KENDALL


This book published by O.U.P. has been translated by Zihl with the assistance of Weiskrantz. The value of this exercise goes far beyond an opportunity to put Poppelreuter's ideas into an historical context because so much of this material is unfamiliar and remains illuminating in its own right. The preface to the translation gives a brief biography of Poppelreuter. The translator has achieved a deep understanding and we are well prepared for Poppelreuter's approach to his subject and the internal and external factors which shaped it, and those which later condemned it to unjustified neglect.

Poppelreuter did not consider his clinical material (cases of missile injuries to the brain sustained in World War One) to be suitable for a study of localisation of function and none is attempted. Thus we do not find the elaborate methods of accurate localization of lesions and the emphasis on the topographic aspects of the visual field defects which occupied Inouye and Holmes. Not only was he sceptical of the concept of a point to point representation of the visual field in the cortex but the location of the damage was irrelevant to Poppelreuter's ultimate objective: rehabilitation. This interest, however, generated a comprehensive account of the functional consequences of the occipital damage in these patients aided by a thorough grounding in Gestalt Psychology. Each aspect of visual function is illustrated by an essay describing the basic psychological principles, these are charged with Poppelreuter's own ideas but are also excellent summaries of the state of
Uncommon Psychiatric Syndromes

This unsuccessful and volume presents the history, clinical features and discusses the aetiology of eleven unusual "fascinomata". The syndromes include: Capgras, De Clarambault (psychos exotropia, or pure erotomania), Ganser, Othello, Munchausen, and Tourette as well as Cotard (le délie de negation). Folie à deux, Ekibom (delusional parasitosis, not restless legs), Couvade, and Possession states. It is intended as a scholarly review and indeed it is discursive in its coverage. But it is evident that sadly, there remains a gulf between psychiatry and neurology in attitudes and concepts of aetiology in the several syndromes which bridge both specialties. Well written, and always entertaining by virtue of the topics considered, it yet fails to penetrate adequately the recent genetic and neurochemical data available in, for example, Gilles de la Tourette's syndrome. We learn that dystasia is the basis of the Gilles state in pure form. Munchausen's syndrome is characterised by pathological lying, masochistic self-destruction, yet compulsory admission and detention are seen as essential, and there is a need for prolonged supportive psychotherapy. The notion of malingering is largely dismissed, and the important but difficult borderline between illness and deliberate manufacture of findings and deceptions receives perfunctory attention.

Good reference lists are marred by numerous inaccuracies and by omission of titles and last pages. Despite these pecadilloes it is an instructive and entertaining read.

JMS PEARCE


The first edition of this book (Radiation Damage to the Nervous System, 1980) was a seminal reference work throughout the 1980's and upon opening this new volume it surprised me that there was no reference to the previous edition. This current work is longer (482 pages) and has a broader appeal. The first 90 pages represent a synopsis of modern radiobiological thinking and serve as a good introduction to the following chapters reviewing the brain radiation tolerance data from small and large animal work. I was pleased to see the problems of retreatment data and volume effect data (two particularly problematic areas) tackled in these reviews. The next section details clinical and human data with chapters on pathology, diagnostic imaging of radiation injury and management of radiation necrosis. I was very pleased indeed to find whole chapters devoted to the radiation tolerance of optic and hypothalamo-neurohypophysial pathways—particularly important areas, and so much better understood than ten years ago.

It is strongly recommended for neurologists and clinical geneticists in training or in practice, and it should be available for reference in most medical libraries.

RB GODWIN-AUSTEN

Gordon Plant

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