Post exertional headache

I was interested in the report of Garcia-Albea et al on post exertional headache but they should not include footballers' migraine in this category. This is triggered, not by running about the field, but by blows to the head, either in heading the ball or— in the more robust form of the game— playing scrum half.1

WB MATTHEWS
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In a somewhat philosophical preface to the second edition of "Neurologic Diagnosis", Otto Appenzeller describes the book as a "timely addition to the training of clinical neurologists", bemoaning, not without amusing hyperbole, the retreat of clinical skills in the face of a growing public knowledge and awareness of the advantages of "neurodiagnostic testing". He refers to the trend towards defensive medicine and the relative security of the "report" and hence the over-investigation on the neurological patient. This is a timely and well considered warning.

The book itself, translated from the original German by Otto, is the second edition of Mark Mummenhalter's script and, if I feel, does achieve its aim to "show how best to arrive at a diagnosis, and judiciously to employ the support of neurodiagnostic investigation".

The text is supported by some very good illustrations and a leaning of neuroanatomical and neuropathological correlation. Perhaps the format is a little "dated", but none the worse for that.

J B FOSTER


This brief 200 page manual edited by two of the pioneers in the field distils the wisdom of 20 years practical experience. The experimental techniques are presented for "any neuroscientist who wishes to use neural transplantation in his or her own laboratory"1. There are Chapters on Staging and dissection of rat embryos (the editors); Grafting genetically modified cells (Gage and colleagues); Neural transplantation in adult rats (the editors); Intracerebral transplantation to immature hosts (Lund and Yee); Peripheral nerve grafts to study CNS regeneration (Aguayo and colleagues); Replantation of ulnar nerve to spinal cord (Blakemore and Crang); Neural transplantation in primates (Annet and Ridley); Human embryonic tissue (Brundin); Immunology (Lund and Banerjee); Identifying grafted cells (Cadusseau and Peschanski). An appendix provides information on suppliers of specialist items. The text is liberally illustrated, and practical protocols with essential detail are provided throughout. A "must" for anyone entering the field, and an invaluable bench mark of best technique for those already engaged in this exciting area of neuroscience.

C D MARSIDEN


Sir Roger Bannister concluded the preface to the first edition of his book with the words of his teacher, Sir George Pickering, that it was 'in fact no more than an overture. The main body of the work is to come.' This third edition is a revision of the second edition with 20 new chapters from worldwide authors, and illustrates that prophecy.

The editors and authors have succeeded in compiling an excellent comprehensive volume on the autonomic nervous system including genetics, molecular biology, anatomy, investigations and diseases which, despite its multi-authorship, avoids the problem of repetition and shows the editors' knowledge and experience of the assessment of patients with autonomic failure. There are important practical points about testing autonomic disorders such as the time which should be taken to assess maximal constriction of the pupil with pilocarpine in the Adie syndrome and the value of urodynamical assessment, together with an excellent critique of the interpretation and validity of the commonly used clinical tests.

The volume is well balanced with an emphasis on diabetic autonomic failure, autonomic dysfunction in peripheral nerve disease, and the association of autonomic failure with extrapyramidal syndromes. Though the chapter on dopamine beta-hydroxylase deficiency seems disproportionately lengthy, it is justified by the importance of molecular and biochemical models which it provides, and reflects the interest of the editors. The final section on disorders affecting autonomic function involving syncope and fainting, cardiac dysrhythmias and hypertension illustrates the implications of the autonomic nervous system in medical practice and assures a wider readership than clinical neurology alone.

The publishers are to be congratulated on the fact that, despite formidable size (over 904 pages), the book easily remains open at the requisite page when placed on a desk and avoids constant struggling to find, or keep, one's place.

DAVID BATES


I have long been searching for a small textbook that will solve all my neuroradiological diagnostic dilemmas; or at least provide a sensible differential list when I realise "I have never seen one of those before." Such a book does not exist but Dr Osborn's work goes some way to answering this need.

The 400 pages are essentially a collection of lists. My main concern is that the subheadings are too broad and not individually identified. If they were in heavy type, or underlined, the book would be much easier to use. At first sight it appears similar to a number of texts that are aimed at trainee radiologists preparing for their final professional examination. In reality it is much more than this and will be of value to trained neuroradiologists and to clinicians working in related fields. There are excellent sections on normal anatomy and variants, and abnormal brain development. Disease processes are arranged by anatomical location. There is an appropriate emphasis on the MR appearance of various pathologies.

This massive compendium costs £165. There are 73 contributors, mainly from North America with a few contributions from Japan, France, Germany, Italy, Switzerland and the UK. The book is noticeably absent. The coverage is wide-ranging and includes pathophysiology, imaging, clinical manifestations and therapy both medical and surgical; there is also a good section on medical diseases and stroke. Each contribution is accompanied by an extensive bibliography.

The book suffers, however, from lack of strong editorial direction. There are no cross references; the work is in effect a compendium of 73 separate articles, which causes problems. For example, under completed stroke it is stated that anticoagulants serve no purpose after major infarction and their value for more modest ishaemia is unproven. It goes on to say that their superiority to aspirin and ticlopidine is unknown implying the latter are of proven value which must be doubted. One has to look elsewhere to find that anticoagulants for infarction are of value, when the infarct is embolic in origin. Readers knowledgeable about strokes will no doubt find their way around; the less well informed person who is "looking something up" could well be misled by the lack of cross reference between sections.

The contribution by JP Mohr on classification is particularly helpful as it is that on platelet function and antiplatelet therapy by Babette B Weksler. However, in the latter, the account of ticlopidine (which is usually hailed in the preface to the entire volume as a flourishing advance) is inadequate. The side-effects, including the dangerous neutropenia, are faithfully recorded but no attempt is made to make a risk benefit analysis. Comment that such aspirin is confined to the reduction in the number of further vascular events; the incidence of side-effects and their seriousness are not compared. A cautious but encouraging attitude is adopted in the section on thrombolytic therapy.

The section on carotid endarterectomy relates the widespread, indiscriminate use of this operation which was followed by inter- and intraoperative criticism leading to a dramatic retreat from an operation which has now been shown to be of value for symptomatic stenosis greater than 70 per cent. Although the book includes the word management in its title, a disorsy 13 of the 1270 pages are devoted to rehabilitation. It therefore provides useful access to a lot of information but as a definitive guide to the management of cerebrovascular disease it is disappointing.

JOHN MARSHALL


Experimental animal models have played a major role in evaluating both pathophysiological mechanisms and treatment approaches to a variety of neurological disorders. Such studies will continue to be of prime importance in complementing data obtained from patients. The focus of the book is on both common and uncommon diseases including Alzheimer's Disease, Huntington's chorea, Parkinson's disease (both rodent and primate models), genetic dysmyelination, non-genetic models of myelin disorders, the cerebellar ataxias and the rare Lesch-Nyhan disease.

There is an opening chapter on the ethics of animal models of neurological diseases which cogently discusses various general ethical principles underlying animal experimentation in particular assessment of pain. Legal aspects of such work are also included, an original idea. The remaining chapters vary somewhat in length but they are all first-rate, wide ranging and show a considerable uniformity of style. The general format has been to give a general introduction to the disease which is then followed by practical details which vary in their extent. For example, some chapters such as the ones on Parkinson's disease and Alzheimer's disease give detailed experimental protocols which would allow the reader to carry out his/her own experimentation. The rationale, advantages and disadvantages of the various techniques are described clearly and even for the non-specialist such as myself it is possible to gain very useful insights into the methodologies. In some cases, such as the chapter on genetic dysmyelination, one is given details of the various animal models rather than detailed protocols. In discussing non-genetic myelin models, there is an extensive general discussion of virally induced CNS myelin disorders which is useful, especially for the non-neurologist.

Overall this is an excellent book. The chapters are very comprehensive on the whole, topical and well-written. It is also an impressive general review of experimental animal methods. My only negative comment is the price £76.00.

PETER GE KENNEDY

SHORT NOTICES


Book reviews