than the Spanish case. The EEG, normal for background activity, did not differ from an EEG of primary idiopathic generalised myoclonic epilepsy and the patient had had only one isolated myoclonic seizure of the upper arms.

Rubio *et al*¹ have confirmed our reported data and it is interesting that the less aggressive skin and muscle biopsies are diagnostic in the early stages of the disease.

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Devic's neuromyelitis optica and Schilder's myelinoclastic diffuse sclerosis

I read with interest the article by Hainfellner *et al*¹ reporting the occurrence of Devic's neuromyelitis optica and Schilder's myelinoclastic diffuse sclerosis. I was surprised to find no information about anti-DNA antibodies or complement levels. Furthermore it was stated that the erythrocyte sedimentation rate was 27 mm in the first hour and that necropsy revealed perivascular lymphoid cell infiltrates of varying prominence. These findings, including the observation of cerebrospinal fluid immunoglobulin abnormalities, can be seen in systemic lupus erythematosus (SLE).² It is known that SLE may induce Devic's syndrome and may lead to a false diagnosis of demyelinating disease, especially when systemic manifestations of the disease are not yet present.^{3,4} I followed a patient with SLE and Devic's syndrome who was reported elsewhere.⁵ What are the arguments against SLE being the cause of the disease observed in the patient reported by Hainfellner *et al*?

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NOTICES

Riyadh Armed Forces Hospital Fourth International Course on Magnetic Resonance Imaging

The Departments of Radiology, Medical Physics and Medical Studies of the Riyadh Armed Forces Hospital are sponsoring the Fourth Course on Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) on 2-5 October 1994. The course will provide an overview of MRI technology, and basic principles, current, and future applications of MRI in the whole body. Current and potential applications of MRI spectroscopy will also be discussed. Small group workshops on basic physics, neuro-applications, musculoskeletal and genitourinary systems will be provided for all participants. Fees: 1300 Saudi Riyals (1\$ = 3.75 Riyals); 650 Saudi Riyals for medical staff-in-training; 325 Saudi Riyals for radiographers. For further information contact: Department of Medical Studies, Armed Forces Hospital, PO Box 7897, Riyadh 11159, Saudi Arabia. Tel: ++966 1 477 7714 (Ext. 2289/2269); Fax: ++966 1 477 7194/477 9168.

Third International Congress of Movement Disorders

The congress will be held on 8-12 November 1994 in Lake Buena Vista (Orlando), Florida, USA. The deadline for abstract submission is 1 April 1994. For further information contact: Central Headquarters Office, The Movement Disorder Society, PO Box 6, Clarastrasse 57, CH-4005 Basel, Switzerland. Tel: ++41 61 691 51 11; Fax: ++41 61 691 81 89.

BOOK REVIEWS

All titles reviewed here are available from the BMJ Bookshop, PO Box 295, London WC1H 9TE. Prices include postage in the United Kingdom and for members of the British Forces Overseas, but overseas customers should add £2 per item for postage and packing. Payment can be made by cheque in sterling drawn on a United Kingdom bank, or by credit card (Mastercard, Visa or American Express) stating card number, expiry date, and your full name.

Neuropsychology of the Amnesic Syndrome (Brain Damage, Behaviour and Cognition Series). By A J PARKIN and N R C LENG. (Pp 202 Illustrated; Price: £24.95). 1993. Hove (UK) Lawrence Erlbaum Assoc. Publishers. ISBN 0-86377-200-5.

For the purposes of this book the "amnesic syndrome" is defined in terms of permanent, non-progressive forms of amnesia linked to cerebral pathology. In practice the disorders considered as meeting this definition are amnesic phenomena associated with such things as the Wernicke-Korsakoff

syndrome, temporal lobe damage, diencephalic and thalamic lesions, herpes simplex encephalitis and anterior communicating aneurysms. After introductory chapters discussing models of memory and the assessment of memory disorders, neuropsychological research into amnesia resulting from each of the above causes is described. The book concludes with a discussion of some underlying theoretical issues and a brief chapter on the remediation of memory disorder.

Because the neuropsychology of amnesia is a heavily researched area with a large volume of potentially relevant published work, this book attempts to encompass a great deal in little more than 150 pages. This is inevitably selective and occasionally skates a little thinly over some details that might suggest reservations about the picture that is being offered. Nevertheless, the selection is generally judicious and the discussion is almost always clear and easy to follow as well as being up-to-date.

Overall this book can certainly be recommended as a useful and clear introduction to the psychology of amnesic syndromes. As such it fills a definite gap and deserves to be widely read by members of the various disciplines concerned with the problem of amnesia and not just by psychologists.

E MILLER

Down Syndrome & Alzheimer Disease (Progress in Clinical and Biological Research Vol. 379). EDITED by LYNN NADEL and CHARLES JEPSTEIN. (Pp 318; Price \$96.00). 1992. New York, Wiley-Liss Inc. ISBN 0-471-58841-5.

This book primarily serves as a permanent record of the proceedings of the 8th Science Symposium of the National Down Syndrome Society of the US, held in New York in January 1992. Its contents are 17 unedited, rapid reproduction manuscripts covering clinical aspects of dementia in Down's syndrome, chromosome 21, and animal models. Thus, there is considerable variation in the balance between review, and reporting of personal research work. A good proportion of the review material is also repeated from chapter to chapter.

The contents explore a number of associations. First, the development of features of Alzheimer's disease in Down's syndrome or trisomy 21, which pointed towards the second main observation of mutations of the amyloid precursor protein gene in some families with Alzheimer's disease. There is also an apparent increase in Down's syndrome in relatives of those with Alzheimer's disease. The observation that amyloid may be deposited in the brain in Down's syndrome and normal people as long as 30 years before the onset of dementia also appears to support amyloid as the prerequisite for neuronal loss and tangles. However the link between the amyloid gene mutations in Alzheimer's disease, and the pathogenesis of Alzheimer pathology in Down's and Alzheimer's remains obscure. Since preparation of the book, a cloud has descended over the validity of early claims that transgenic models with alterations of normal amyloid precursor protein expression develop neuronal loss and tangles.

This book will have a fairly limited appeal, mainly to budding research scien-

tists developing an interest in the dementia of Down's syndrome. It also serves to identify established researchers in this area. There is better literature for those whose primary interest is Alzheimer's disease.

WRG GIBB

Clinical Electromyography 2nd Edition. Edited by W M BROWN and CHARLES F BOLTON. (Pp 810 Illustrated; Price: £120.00). 1993. Oxford, Butterworth-Heinemann. ISBN 0-7506-9204-9.

This multi authored book follows the 1st edition in 1987. The contributors are from a number of countries and generally represent experts in their particular subjects. The book is one third longer than the previous edition and a number of chapters are written by new authors. The layout of the book differs from the usual electromyographic text by considering subjects such as central electromyography and tremor, in the first chapters, before the first chapter on diseases of the peripheral nervous system (chapter seven).

There are particular subjects discussed in the book which are well written and of great interest such as positive and negative aspects of neurofibre dysfunction, autonomic nervous system, atypical motor neurone diseases, ischaemic neuropathy and critical care neuropathy. A number of the chapters contain normal values.

This monograph is well balanced for a multi-authored text. There are definite advantages in recruiting new authors for different editions as it provides a fresh approach to the problems discussed rather than minimal updating which all too frequently occurs. The illustrations are well produced and the chapters adequately referenced. The book functions as a reference book rather than as a manual for novices. The authors have produced an excellent book which is well indexed and easy to handle; it is highly recommended.

MS SCHWARTZ

Vision. By PIERRE BUSER and MICHEL IMBERT (Translated by RH KAY). (Pp 559; Price: £40.50). 1992. London, The MIT Press. ISBN 0-262-02336-9.

The study of the neural basis of vision is one of the fastest growing areas in neuroscience yet there are surprisingly few texts written for senior undergraduates and postgraduates in the basic and clinical neurosciences. This book, originally published in French by the authors in 1987, has been expertly translated by Dr R. H. Kay and possesses none of the usual idiosyncratic language usage which is usually associated with such translations. The book is divided into five sections which cover the structure and function of the retina, the physical characteristics of visual stimuli, the psychophysical laws of visual sensation, genesis and elaboration of signals in the retina, and mechanisms in the central visual pathways.

The text, which is clearly and logically written, is supplemented by almost two hundred and fifty illustrations, usually from the original literature. However one of the

slightly irritating features of the book is an inconsistent approach to giving references to support statements. At this level it is obviously inappropriate to overburden the text with excessive citations but some important areas e.g. cortical colour vision are surprisingly bereft of citations, whereas others e.g. cortical motion processing, abound. In future editions sections might usefully end with lists of key original references and reviews. Because of the inevitable delay due to translation the references which are quoted extend only to the mid 1980's.

Although the main text deals with mammals a useful comparative approach is provided by the numerous short sections summarising data from non-mammalian species. This is particularly illuminating in the section on cortical visual processing.

This book would therefore serve as a useful starting point for undergraduates taking courses in visual neuroscience, psychophysics or perception. Graduate students in these areas will probably require more advance texts which are better referenced. For the non biologists interested in visual perception, such as those working in artificial intelligence and computational vision, the book will provide a very adequate background to the problems to be elucidated.

CHRISTOPHER KENNARD

The Neuropathology of HIV Infection. Edited by FRANCESCO SCARAVILLI. (Pp 270 Illustrated; Price: DM398.00). 1993. Heidelberg, Springer-Verlag. ISBN 3-540-19739-7.

This book is a welcome addition to the already existing, substantial literature on the subject. Professor F Scaravilli of the Institute of Neurology has been most successful in assembling a group of internationally leading experts as authors to produce a book of high standard. The title is somewhat misleading, since it covers much wider fields than strictly defined neuropathology. Of the 13 chapters only seven deal with various aspects of neuropathology, whilst the other six cover other, relevant and complementary areas of AIDS. The chapters are organised in a logical fashion providing the reader with a coherent account of the subject rather than a haphazard selection of chapters.

The first four chapters give a succinct review of the molecular biology and pathogenesis, epidemiology and natural history, neurological complications and neuroradiological imaging. There is an exemplary chapter on general pathology, followed by neuropathology of the central nervous system. These two chapters form the backbone of the book, comprising 40% of its volume. While the former chapter gives an account of diseases of the various organ systems, the chapter on neuropathology reviews opportunistic infections, neoplasms, vascular disorders and a host of miscellaneous disorders. It is both informative and copiously illustrated. Other diseases, however, which are now considered to be caused by HIV-1 are reviewed separately together with HIV-associated dementia. The involvement of the spinal cord, and the neuropathology of AIDS in children, are reviewed in two concise, excellent chapters. The strength of

the chapter on diseases of peripheral nerves and muscles is based on a sound clinico-pathological approach. Separate chapters are devoted to the role of macrophages in HIV encephalitis, and to immunohistochemical and *in situ* hybridisation study of the same disease. The concluding overview brings in two additional, important topics, treatments and animal models, and summarises the outstanding questions which require clarification.

There are shortcomings for which neither the Editor, nor the Authors can be blamed. Research in AIDS is a fast-moving field and most references are from the second half of the last decade. This delay in publication adversely affects those chapters in which there have been recent developments. It is a pity that there are so few coloured pictures, some of the illustrations of immunohistochemistry should have been reproduced in colour. Finally, the price of the book is excessive. Yet, this is a book worth having.

PL LANTOS

Brain Surgery: Complication Avoidance and Management (2 vols). Edited by MICHAEL J AFUZZO. (Pp 2366 Illustrated; Price: £350.00). 1993. Edinburgh, Churchill Livingstone. ISBN 0-443-08709-1.

Over the last two decades text books of operative neurosurgery have proliferated and have become bigger and more comprehensive. However, this book represents a departure from the standard pattern of such text books. Its scope is limited to the brain alone and, although it describes comprehensively diagnosis and operative technique, it is sharply focussed, as the sub-title suggests, on ways to minimise the risks and consequences of complications in neurosurgery.

The definition of what constitutes a complication in neurosurgical management is itself debated in the book, with consideration of evidence from a poll by questionnaire of practising neurosurgeons. The shortest workable definition, is of an unexpected and undesirable event associated with neurosurgical management. It is clear that one very important route to improved patient care is an awareness of the range of complications so that thought may be applied to avoiding or treating them. It is also clear that avoidance of complications in neurosurgery is generally about reducing morbidity and mortality in the perioperative period rather than, in most instances, considering the utility of neurosurgical procedures in modifying the natural history of disease. Therefore, the emphasis is on short term results rather than long term results, although clearly perioperative morbidity can affect both quality and length of long term survival.

The editor has recruited over 200 contributors, 95% of whom work in North America, to write 91 chapters. The result is a comprehensive compendium of contemporary neurosurgical practice, which runs to 2500 printed pages. The first volume is devoted to the first three of seven parts concerned with brain surgery in the supratentorial compartment. Part one covers general aspects including basic neurosurgical tech-