
This collection of papers opens with a brief review of current views of normal and abnormal ageing, and proceeds to studies on cerebrovascular disease, urology, psychiatry, and a wide range of clinical topics such as hypothermia, negative nitrogen balance, and pressure sores. The chapters on bladder dysfunction, particularly those on urinary incontinence, are extremely valuable, for treatment of this, if based on correct physiological principles, can be most rewarding; normal physiology, and the technique and interpretation of cystometry, are all well presented. The section on psychiatry presents many interesting studies, most notable being that on the prevalence of psychiatric disorder in old people in the general population; the extent of the problem is great, as shown by the fact that only a small fraction of such old people are being cared for in institutions. The importance of prophylaxis in this field is once again stressed.


The diagnostic value of conventional radiography of the skull is often overshadowed by the information gained from specialized contrast examinations in neuroradiology. This book is important as it is a strong reminder that essential information is frequently provided by plain radiography of the skull, and this point is stressed by the authors in the examination of children and adolescents. Careful study of the survey examination of the skull may often indicate the type of radiological examination most likely to provide added information, or such study may even make further specialized diagnostic neuroradiology unnecessary.

The authors have a wide experience and the material analysed is based upon the conventional radiology and case histories of 626 patients with raised intracranial pressure. The variability of sellar changes in increased intracranial pressure in children has been carefully evaluated, and the approximate duration of increased pressure could often be deduced from the type of bone change in the sella turcica. The duration of increased pressure could seldom be determined from the type or extent of suture diastasis, and pathological deepening of the digital impressions was found to be of limited value in the assessment. The authors support the prevailing opinion among radiologists that the normal variability of digital impressions on the inner table of the vault in children makes this sign difficult to evaluate.

Pathological calcification in intracranial tumours is probably more commonly seen in children than in adults, and the authors confirm that the pattern of calcification in intracranial tumours occurring during the first two decades of life is seldom type specific. However, the anatomical distribution of demonstrable calcification may lead to a definitive diagnosis, as for example in craniopharyngeomas.

Much of the detailed description of the skull changes associated with supratentorial and infratentorial lesions in children has appeared on occasion elsewhere in the world literature, but this presentation is good and concise and the book is full of illuminating details about the variable radiological appearances in increased intracranial pressure from various causes, of value in differential diagnosis both to the radiologist and to the clinician.

The numerous illustrations are of uniformly high quality, and the bibliography is worldwide and excellent but has a few outstanding omissions; the meticulous work of Mahmoud El Sayed on sellar changes in increased intracranial pressure should certainly have received acknowledgement. These are small criticisms, however, and, for those with a working knowledge of the German language, this book will be found to be a most valuable contribution to the subject.

GORDON L. GRYSPERD T


Pavlovian concepts are fashionable today and the re-printing of these two volumes is well-timed. In them the authentic voice of an original mind triumphs over the leaden translation. The familiar material is freshened by the observations, arguments, assertions, and opinions of one of the great system-builders in neurobiology. The lectures remain necessary reading for anyone interested in the higher functions of the central nervous system and the value of the text is enhanced by Dr. Gantt’s two introductory essays, one biographical and the other critical.

CONFERENCES

The annual meeting of the Scandinavian Neurosurgical Society has been cancelled for this year because of the meeting of the third International Congress of Neurological Surgery which will take place in Copenhagen, Denmark, from 23 to 27 August 1965. Further information may be obtained from the Secretariat, Dis Congress Service, 19 Sankt Peders Stræde, Copenhagen K.

The first American conference on the ‘Medical diagnostic application of ultrasound’ will be held in the Hilton Hotel, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, on 20 and 21 May 1965. Further information may be obtained from Campbell Moses, M.D., Director of Postgraduate Medicine, University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, 15213, U.S.A.