International Society for Neurochemistry and the main purpose was stated as the exploration of the contributions of neurochemical research to understanding problems in clinical neurology. There is little evidence from the publication of any dialogue between clinicians and scientists—there is no record of discussions which may have taken place after the formal contributions had been given. Nevertheless, within those limitations, the quality of the contributions is high and the book provides a good up-to-date account of current biochemical knowledge and of the contributions neurochemists could make to neurology. The papers were submitted as camera-ready material thus giving the editors little scope for editing. I find the absence of summaries a great disadvantage although the editors have obviously encouraged their authors to end their contributions with comments on future developments and perspectives. The index is only partly useful—it seems to have been compiled from key words supplied by the authors and each item in the index does not refer to the pages on which it appears but to the first page of that article in which it appears. Many interesting aspects are not listed in the index. This is a pity because the wealth of good information available in this compilation is not easily extracted without reading right through each chapter. In current times this is often impossible; the reader may well prefer to use such a source for reference purposes. This type of publication is unfortunately increasing. It is relatively straightforward to gather together a group of eminent, interesting speakers who provide equally interesting manuscripts. It is much more arduous to provide the reader with the standard means of getting full value—good summaries and a thorough index. One wonders when publishers will get the message that such books would prove so much more useful if they were done—perhaps their marketability as well?

**HS BACHELARD**


Although the new American psychiatric classification (DSM-III) strenuously laboured to omit the term “neurosis,” the label will nevertheless outline its obituarists, as witnessed by this book. Neurosis is so vast an area that definite review would be a Herculean task. This modest paperback book is a useful introduction to some aspects of the subject, especially on depressive neurosis, anorexia nervosa and self-regulatory modes of treatment. It gives conventional accounts of the main neuroses and their treatments, drawing on published work until 1979. For postgraduates reading in the area this text is a handy start, though far from being comprehensive. In particular, behavioural psychotherapy is skimpily dealt with. The predominant method of exposure in vivo for the reduction of phobias and compulsive rituals is mentioned only in passing, and the treatment of sexual skills training is not adequately described. Anxiety control training is given rather more space than is warranted by the absence of controlled studies testifying to its value and curious prescriptions are sometimes offered without evidence to back them up; eg that for anorexia nervosa psychotherapy “should be carried out by a psychiatrist or clinical psychologist and should last for at least an hour each week.” Inevitably there are errors, as on p20, where it is stated incorrectly that “many patients with animal phobias do in fact have a later age of onset of their neurosis,” or on page 99 obsessive-compulsive disorder the less good the prospect of ultimate recovery, a point which does not hold for recovery with exposure in vivo. The book should be made available for all libraries.

**ISAAC MARKS**


Dr Touwen is concerned about the minimal cerebral dysfunction (maximal neurological confusion) controversy and rightly so. His skill is to describe meticulously the conduct of a good neurological examination of children. His concern is to describe and to grade objective, reproducible but minor neurological signs and few practising paediatric neurologists would disagree with his description except in details. Thus the book is very useful for any doctor training in the skills of paediatric neurology, particularly after reading the expanded discussion in this edition. The lack of normative data relating to his tests weakens the usefulness of the tests though this is defended in the text. The argument that performance is considerably influenced by cultural and social factors to such an extent that local norms are necessary is justifiable though his own findings in his population would have been fascinating. It is doubtful whether his test, which occupies 10 pages of text, is actually used as it stands in daily work, not only because of its length but also because he includes the physical features of such a range of frank neurological disorders. The book describes the examination of the child with neurological disease to a greater extent than might be anticipated from the title. The testing has been used effectively in controlled studies of apparently healthy children (for example with febrile convulsions) but most workers are likely to use a shorter battery.

Where the book is less helpful is in the area of examination which causes the paediatric neurologist and school medical officer most difficulty. He describes this as the “Syndrome consisting of the absence of a syndrome.” What of the child whose individual minor signs are inconsistent within the one child, though each is in itself reproducible? What of the child who shows few of his minor signs yet cannot tie his laces or ride a bicycle? What of the child who shows marked minor signs but who functions adequately in everyday tasks? There are children who make neat drawings and atrocious writing, adequate musicians who can’t catch a ball, others have a marked articulatory dyspraxia but no other dyspraxic features. Which, if any of these, should be described as clumsy children? There is no answer to such questions at present yet these are the difficult problems for experienced practitioners. Clearly the temperament, past experience and daily management of a child will affect the behavioural profile of that child. Motivation and practice vary so widely that a given minor neurological dysfunction may or may not give rise to practical difficulty. Touwen recognises these problems and this is a strength of his book. This is
a useful reference book but there will be more to be said on the subject in future, hopefully.

IAN MCKINLAY

The Cerebral Microvasculature Vol 131

This volume contains the proceedings of the Second International Symposium on the Pathophysiology of Cerebral Energy Metabolism, held in Belgrade in September 1979. The contributions have been divided into two sections, firstly “Transport properties and permeability” (13 papers), which includes papers on active transport, enzyme systems and sodium and potassium flux in isolated cerebral capillaries and enzyme activity and behaviour in cell culture of isolated endothelial cells. There are papers on the metabolism, structure and function of the vascular basement membrane, blood-retina barrier and two papers on central adrenergic control of vascular permeability. The second part of the book is on “Perturbations of the barrier” (12 papers) and includes papers on the effects of anaesthesia, hyperosmotic agents, changes in blood pressure, trauma, ischaemia and tumours.

Most authors present current or very recent work at symposia and the published proceedings are often preliminary communications with the definitive paper to follow. The papers in this volume have all been considerably expanded for publication and include comprehensive references, which add considerably to the value of the book as a source of reference. As in all such publications, the papers are on rather specific and limited aspects of the subject and, as such, should be used as a source of reference on specific points, rather than read as a review of the topic as a whole. Most publications of symposia are of interest only to those who attend it, but this volume will be more widely used as a source of reference by those working in this field and therefore most large medical libraries will require a copy. There is an adequate subject index but, regrettably, no author index.

MD O’BRIEN

Circulatory and Developmental Aspects of Brain Metabolism Edited by Maria Spatz, BB Mrusulja, Lj M Rakic, and WD Lust (pp 426; $49.50) New York: Plenum Press, 1980.

This volume contains the proceedings of the Second International Symposium on the Pathophysiology of Cerebral Energy Metabolism, held in Belgrade in September 1919. About one-third of the chapters are contributed by the Yugoslavian hosts, while the remaining chapters are supplied by research groups chiefly from the United States and Western Europe. As implied by the title, the book is divided into two topics: one dealing with circulatory aspects of brain metabolism (dominated by chapters on the effects of cerebral ischaemia); the other dealing with developmental aspects of brain metabolism, such as macromolecular composition and turnover, development of structural interactions, and the effect of chemically induced convulsions on cerebral development and function.

Animal models for transient ischaemia (carotid artery occlusion or the use of pressure cuffs) were used by most authors to permit the study of possible post-ischaemic recovery of cerebral blood flow, spontaneous electrical activity, metabolite levels and enzyme activities. The observed post-ischaemic state of hypermetabolism is regarded by several of the authors as an indicator of metabolic damage incurred during ischaemia. KA Hossmann and his co-workers have compared the effect of post-ischaemic administration of barbiturates, hypothermia, and haemodilution in preventing this state of hypermetabolism, and conclude that based on biochemical and electrophysiological recovery, haemodilution offers the best protection. E Westergaard discusses the increased permeability across the blood brain barrier induced by acute hypertension and several authors report on the properties of isolated brain capillaries. The coverage of both topics is restricted to animal experimental studies. The book is probably most useful to scientists doing research in related areas.

AG CHAPMAN


This publication contains over 50 contributions to the Fourth Meeting of the European Society for Stereotactic and Functional Neurosurgery. They review recent progress and trends, mainly in the field of epilepsy and intractable pain. In the former, Rasmussen, Balslev, and Talairach each writes of his experience and emphasises the value of stereotactically implanted chronic depth electrodes to locate epileptogenic foci or pathways for the spread of epileptic discharges. Gillingham advocates such studies in cases of intractable grand mal, and reports improvement after placing lesions in the globus pallidus and internal capsule. With recent progress in pharmacological control, it is to be hoped that such procedures will soon no longer be required in the management of “idiopathic” epilepsy; however, every attempt must be made to learn as much as possible concerning the underlying mechanisms during chronic depth electrode recordings. Electroencephalographic recordings whilst these are still necessary; for the future, some cases of temporal lobe epilepsy, and certain localised cortical lesions elsewhere in the hemisphere may be the only indication for surgical intervention.

Reynolds’ report 12 years ago of the analgesic effects of periaqueductal grey matter stimulation in the rat, and the discovery of endorphine, has encouraged the search for outside sites for chronic electrical stimulation in the central nervous system for pain. Papers by Hosobuchi and Mundinger are clear and encouraging, and deserve particular mention.

Experiences in chronic cerebellar stimulation are conflicting, and what was first promised to be a useful therapeutic tool, does not seem to have lived up to its early promise.

JOHN ANDREWS


The pharmacology of the aging brain has become of increasing importance to the drug industry and is beginning...