
This book deals with Neurosurgical Anaesthesia and Intensive Care, which have become almost a speciality with the advances made over the past decades. The book is well set out with useful photographs and diagrams, the literary style is concise, and the more complicated matters are lucidly discussed. The first part of this book is on basic physiological principles and examination techniques seem only to have been added to expand the text suitably for presentation as a separate volume. They deal with the familiar matters of excitation and conduction of the nerve impulse, use of averaging techniques, and types of electrodes, which are found in any treatment of the subject. The sections of importance in these two chapters on measurement of signals, and the authors' own data on temperature effects on conduction velocity, cover only four pages.

In contrast, the chapter describing the normal range of sensory conduction values contains an invaluable compilation of tables and graphs (most of which, throughout the book, are taken from the authors' own data) showing how conduction velocity and amplitude of the sensory action potential vary with age. There are also short sections covering the relative refractory periods, conduction of impulse trains, and slow conducting components of the neural volley, in the median and sural nerves. The final chapter surveys the changes found in diseased nerve, and ends with a short and useful section which attempts to relate neurographic and morphological changes in the nerve. It is in this chapter that the decimal numbering system for subheadings finally gets out of hand, when no less than six digits and five decimal points are needed to classify carpal tunnel syndrome.

The discussions of the relative merits of sensory recording as compared with motor recording are necessarily rather brief in this handbook, and one is left wanting a more complete, textbook treatment. However, until this becomes available, this monograph will be a valuable supplement to the clinical neurophysiological literature.

J ROTHWELL


Can a committee write a text book? It looks as if they can, although only those who enjoy committees should expect to read the results with pleasure. The Royal College of Psychiatrists set up a Working Party to make recommendations concerning facilities for rehabilitating people with chronic psychoses and 15 of the 26 distinguished members of the committee have contributed to the present book. In addition, two chapters and chunks of a third were specially written by contributors who were not members of the original committee: these chapters concern occupational therapy and physiotherapy, Griffiths' (all too short) chapter on psychological aspects of rehabilitation, and two sections on voluntary organisations. The Editors hope that the resultant Volume will be read by administrators and organised of services, as well as by those who run services from day to day. The former hope is more reasonable than the latter. The book neither gives research data relevant to rehabilitation, nor does it provide very intelligible advice to help young doctors, nurses and occupational therapists to plan a programme for John Smith, six years into his schizophrenic illness. This is a great pity, since many of the authors have made distinguished contributions to our knowledge of rehabilitation, and to the shape of rehabilitation services. Many of the chapters are less than 10 pages long, and the various authors tend to adopt a tone of Olympian generality which gives the reader no clear idea of what rehabilitation is about.

The volume opens with two key note chapters: the editors themselves on the clinical basis of rehabilitation, and Hall on psychological assessment. Wing no longer uses his earlier classification of handicap into premorbid, primary and secondary. Premorbid handicaps—despite their importance both as predictors of the course of schizophrenia and as factors to be taken into account in the design of treatment programmes—no longer gain a mention, and are replaced by "social disadvantages". The latter are seen as a result of psychiatric illness; indeed, the term seems to be used synonymously with "social disableness". Each of the first two chapters emphasises the importance of regular assessments, but neither gives examples of assessment scales to give the reader some idea of the uses that can be made of them.

The remainder of the book is distinctly "bitty". The bits your reviewer liked included the accounts of various rehabilitation services at the end of the book by Bennett, Early, Ekdawi and Morgan and the chapter by Nancy Wansborough on the place of work in rehabilitation.

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