

at the rugged but welcoming front door of the other.

"Essential Neurology" is written for medical students and general practitioners and sets out to make neurology interesting, comprehensible, and relevant to medicine in general. There is lots of pragmatic common sense and the enthusiasm of both authors for teaching a subject they really enjoy is delightful. There are even jokes such as what to do if you take Gowers' advice and test for hysterical paralysis of the legs in a surprising way, as well as amusing and very sensible advice, such as including a telephone amongst the tools of the neurological examination to be used to facilitate history-taking from distant friends and relatives (no doubt doubly important in such a large sparsely populated place as Newfoundland). There is a good explanation of how to get the most out of neurological investigations and it is helpful to have sections on the examination of children, the elderly, and for functional disorders as well as on hiccoughs and cramp which often get left out of books like this.

My main criticism is that the book is far too long for an undergraduate text and irony is that it could have been half the length if huge areas of repetition had been eliminated. Presumably this policy is deliberate because it is such an obvious feature and even one or two tables and diagrams are shown in two different places. Unfortunately, even if one can cope with the repetition, there are—for a second edition—some surprising mistakes (such as referring to a non-existent appendix, varying the spelling of Lhermitte, and forgetting about the occipital lobes in the location of disease chapter) and statements that are either wrong or misleading. For example, the CSF does not normally contain up to 10 mononuclear cells per cubic ml, the renal arteries are not frequently spared in polyarteritis nodosa, intracerebral haemorrhage is not one of the most common causes of sudden death, motor neuron disease is not a cause of dementia and I doubt if impaired thermoregulation causing a high fever is a frequent feature of cerebello-pontine angle masses. Measuring the blood pressure in both arms of practically everybody, recommending a routine WR on all hospital admission, and subjecting patients with motor neurone disease to a barium enema in the search for occult malignancy (surely not as high as in 10% of cases?) are attitudes which would not find much support on this side of the Atlantic. Finally, the quality of the illustrations, par-

ticularly the radiographs, leaves a lot to be desired although I rather like the drawings to illustrate delirium and dementia, no doubt inspired by what the rest of Canada regard as typical "Newfie" man.

I shall certainly tell our medical students that this book exists and they must then choose what suits them best. It is competitively priced but it is competing in a crowded market where there are more easily assimilated, readable and accurate texts to be found.

CHARLES WARLOW

**Clinical and Radiological Aspects of Myopathies. CT Scanning—EMG—Radioisotopes.** By JAL Bulcke and AL Baert. (Pp 187; \$51.20.) Heidelberg: Springer-Verlag, 1982.

The essential purpose of this book appears to be a consideration of the use of computerised tomographic (CT) scanning in neuromuscular diseases. Following a short introduction about CT and the "muscular system" there is a rather individual chapter on classification/presentation of myopathy. There are then brief sections on soft tissue radiography (including soft tissue calcification), xeroradiography and radioisotope studies. The main section of the book describes and illustrates CT of muscle. The authors have selected a series of standard levels, from neck to calf, to illustrate "CT anatomy" and subsequently abnormal anatomy with reference to myopathy and some neurogenic lesions. Finally an attempt is made to correlate CT appearances and density measurements with pathology, strength and EMG findings.

The CT reproductions are of good to excellent quality and perusing them lends a new perspective to several aspects of myology. Several large masses of muscles at sites usually documented rather scantily by clinical examination (paraspinal, psoas and pelvic muscles and those of the posterior aspect of the neck) are well shown in particular. The remarkable selectivity of muscle involvement in certain conditions is documented in a way which is not possible on clinical examination and the discussion about pseudo and true hypertrophy is illuminating. As yet correlation of density measurements and EMG with CT appearances seem unrewarding and it is disappointing not to find a rigorous approach taken to correlating cross sectional area and force production, (the MRC scale is really wholly inadequate for this type of analysis).

I found the book thought provoking and stimulating although its clinical content is decidedly patchy and the subheadings "EMG" and "Radioisotopes" on the front cover are probably inappropriate: it will be of particular interest to those with an analytical interest in peripheral neuromuscular disease rather than as a simple aid to diagnosis.

CM WILES

**The Urinary Bladder: Neurology and Dynamics.** By Tage Hald and William E Bradley. (Pp 339; £37.25.) London: Williams & Wilkins, 1982.

Written jointly by a urologist and a neurologist (or, as they are described in the Foreword, a "Uroneurologist and a Neurourologist") this book is successful in combining and focusing the expertise of its twin disciplines in one cover.

The basic neurology and urology of the bladder are considered fairly fully, and a heavy emphasis is then placed on functional studies such as cystometry, urethral closure pressure profile and sphincter electromyography in the diagnosis of problems of continence and voiding. In a field like this, technical terms and their abbreviations inevitably abound, but the text moves forward at a good pace, and is not unduly hard to read. The technical practicalities of urodynamics are well explained. The book has a functional emphasis, even in the section on paediatric problems, which is mainly concerned with congenital malformations and their repair. Most operations mentioned are described very briefly, except for the various artificial sphincters, which receive 11 pages. There is a useful short chapter on drugs and the bladder and urethra.

Appendices reprint the first four reports by the International Continence Society on the standardisation of the terminology of lower, urinary tract function. There are plenty of good diagrams, figures, radiographs, photographs, and a few cartoons. Colour plates are collected on five pages at the end of the book, with monochrome versions in the text. There is a good index to text and figures. Proof reading is not particularly good but most of the errors are minor printing errors.

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