subgroup. The occurrence of antibodies to JC virus in most normal adults suggests that disease occurs only when a normally harmless viral infection is somehow reactivated. This situation has similarities with some herpes virus and retrovirus infections, and viral reactivation is currently a crucial question.

This book is divided into three sections concerning the virology, epidemiology, and neurological diseases associated with JC and BK viruses. Although each section contains much recent and specialised information there are several chapters giving overviews of various areas. Consequently this book avoids being simply a collection of papers, but stands on its own as an excellent account of current thinking on PML. It should be of interest to graduate students and research workers in many fields, including molecular biology, immunology, virology and neurology.

One area of particular interest is the rapid progress being made at the molecular genetic level in identifying possible regulatory sequences in the genome, and the analysis of sequence variation *in vivo* and *in vitro*. Another important area is analysis of the oligodendrocyte lesions which are characteristic of PML by the use of antibodies to defined myelin proteins. In view of the possible connection between viral infections and multiple sclerosis and Guillain-Barre Syndrome, it is especially interesting to study a situation where demyelinating virus really is at work.

WA TAYLOR

Neuromuscular Diseases. Edited by Georges Serratrice, Didier Cros, Claude Desnuelle, Jean-Louis Gastaut, Jean-Francois Pellissier, Jean Pouget, Alain Schiano. (Pp. 630; \$118.00.) New York: Raven Press, 1983.

This book contains contributions from the fifth International Congress on Neuromuscular Diseases held in Marseilles in September, 1982. There are in excess of two hundred authors for the hundred or so brief chapters and, not surprisingly, quality is somewhat uneven. Nevertheless, a high proportion of the world's acknowledged authorities have contributed a chapter, although the peripheral nerve seems to be somewhat under-represented.

The first part is divided into sections dealing with genetic expression in skeletal muscle, prevention of Duchenne dystrophy, fuels in normal and diseased muscle, metabolic congenital myopathies, the

biochemistry of Duchenne dystrophy, mechanisms of muscle cell necrosis/regeneration and a section on membranes in muscle disease. The second part is devoted to the biochemistry and cell membrane functions of peripheral nerves, repair and regeneration and the assessment of sensory function; this part finishes with a, slightly out of place, five chapter section on motor neuron disease. Subsequently, there is a series of chapters on the neuromuscular junction, acetylcholinesterase and myasthenia gravis, and finally a major section on therapy and rehabilitation. In this latter section there are some particularly interesting contributions on the management of scoliosis in neuromuscular disease, the therapeutic trial and the effects of exercise.

This book is relatively up-to-date and the references are extensive. The interested reader can briefly survey current growth areas, especially in the sphere of diseases of muscle and the neuromuscular junction. It is not in any sense a text book of neuromuscular disease, however. The presentation and reproduction of illustrations are of high quality and the index adequate. This is a good book for the specialist library.

CM WILES

Neurology 4: Peripheral Nerve Disorders. Edited by Arthur K Asbury and RW Gilliat. (Pp 339; £25.00.) Sevenoaks: Butterworths, 1984.

Subtitled "A practical approach" this book certainly represents a more manageable size and reasonable price than some larger volumes on the same subject. It opens with an algorithm for diagnosis of peripheral neuropathy which is complex and yet not complex enough to cover all the options, as the rest of the book reveals. Individual chapters by leading authorities provide clear accounts of individual subjects such as diabetic, toxic and genetically determined neuropathies. The opportunity is taken to review the neuropathies associated with paraproteinaemias, a recently recognised group which is beginning to teach us important lessons about myelin and axonal antigens. The most interesting group so far has been those patients with an IgM_k paraprotein and a demyelinating neuropathy. The IgM_k paraprotein of many of these patients represents antibody probably directed against a recently recognised myelin protein, myelin associated glycoprotein, which may be important in axon Schwann cell interactions. Since this book was written Latov and colleagues, who

have been at the forefront of this work, have also demonstrated the specificity of another IgM_k monoclonal for an axonal antigen, chondroitin sulphate C, in axonal neuropathy. The possibility exists that the neuropathies associated with paraproteins represent a family of neuropathies caused by antibodies to several different antigens. These antigens may turn out to be of interest in neurobiology. A Japanese account of a related syndrome of skin hyperpigmentation, oedema, polyneuropathy and plasma cell dyscrasia, added almost as an appendix, represents the most detailed review available of this curious condition. One hopes that the identification of a relevant antigen may elucidate the link between this bizarre collection of symptoms. Accounts of neuropathy encountered in India and Africa deal all too briefly with leprosy, although acknowledging that this represents the commonest form of peripheral neuropathy in both continents. This is because patients with leprosy are treated in special centres and rarely by neurologists. This is another symptom of the general rule whereby conditions which become treatable with the advance of medicine, like meningitis and subacute combined degeneration of the spinal cord, are stolen from the neurologists by internal medicine and other specialists. It is encouraging to see, therefore, that this book gives space to the management of patients with acute generalised paralysis not ignoring nursing, physiotherapy and respiratory care. Every medical library, and many student and practising neurologists will want to have this clearly illustrated volume on their shelves.

RAC HUGHES

CNS Metastases: Neurosurgery in the Aged. (Advances in Neurosurgery Vol. 12). Edited by W Piotrowski, M Brock and M Klinger. (Pp 380; \$30.30.) Heidelberg: Springer-Verlag, 1983.

This volume produced by Springer-Verlag is in essence the proceedings of the 34th Annual Meeting of the German Neuro-Surgical Society held in Mannheim in 1983. There are 56 contributions, some of them 600 words or less; 33 appear to have been invited to speak on a topic, the rest are "free". The subjects range from surgical management of metastatic brain tumours through the symptoms and signs suggestive of an intracranial metastasis to radiotherapy and chemotherapy for the problem. There are also quite a few articles