of relevance to most practicing psychiatrists such as "The Alcoholic Doctor" (Murray)—a fate which overtakes many of our colleagues; "Exhibitionism: An eclectic approach to management" (Rooth)—this being the most commonly committed sexually-related crime; "Management of the acutely disturbed patient on the General Ward" (Pfeiffer)—of particular interest to those of us working in general hospital units; "Management problems in psychogeriatrics" (Pitt)—the fastest growing specialty in medicine.

More recondite perhaps, but nevertheless fascinating are: "The endocrinology of the human pineal" (Mullen and Smith); "Neuropsychiatric aspects of fits and spasms" (Tibbett); and "Monosymptomatic hypochondriacal psychosis" (Munro).

For those seeking a strong forensic flavour, the last section of the book contains chapters on "Battered Wives" (Gayford); "Incest" (Blueglass) and "Rape" (Bowden)—a sorry litany of men's intemperate behaviour to women.

Where else would one find chapters on "Malicious Fire Raising" (Scott) in the company of "Toxic Psychosis" (Davison) and "Psychological aspects and management of obesity" (Mitchell)?

Unfortunately, this book does have some noticeable flaws. Many of the chapters are out of date—some almost to the point of being time-expired. The references of several contributors do not go beyond the 1970s, thereby leaving out many important more recent developments which have taken place. Nowhere is this more glaring than in the consideration of medico-legal questions where there is no mention of the 1983 Mental Health Act. An unfortunate lapse for a book proclaiming itself in its title as "Contemporary". Before leaving the subject of the title, I would have preferred to have seen the book being called Contemporary psychiatry III, thereby clearly distinguishing it from its forerunners.

Despite these shortcomings, I for one am delighted that the series has continued to flourish—long may it do so.

TREVOR SILVERSTONE


This book comprises a series of 22 review papers and four summaries, grouped under the headings CSF hydrodynamics and physiology, biomechanics and theoretical models of hydrocephalus, laboratory models, and clinically applied research in hydrocephalus. The papers are based on invited contributions to a Workshop in hydrocephalus, and the authors are well known and established in this field. Discussion is not presented verbatim, but is incorporated in the summaries. The first section includes a valuable and authoritative review by Davson of the development of concepts of CSF absorption and drainage. Other topics covered in this section include the relationship of the brain extra-cellular space with the CSF compartment in hydrocephalus and brain oedema, and the contribution of lymatics in the olfactory/ethmoid region to CSF drainage; the evidence for this in man remains doubtful.

The final section on clinically applied research includes a carefully considered paper by Epstein on the "slit ventricle syndrome"; although based on presentation of only four cases, his view that this syndrome differs from shunt malfunction is provocative but not all neurosurgeons will agree with the implication that the syndrome is "benign".

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TREVOR SILVERSTONE


This is really a book on the cytology of the cerebrospinal fluid (CSF) illustrated in black and white as practised at the University College of Los Angeles (UCLA) by the authoress. It contains much practical advice and truth about how to do justice to a subject which is expanding, with the demands on the cytologist from the clinicians—on behalf of the patients—becoming more and more exacting. At the UCLA the diagnostic cytology of the CSF must be of a very high quality. That is not the case in many other places, and would not be possible for an occasional performer, nor even with this book. The text and the legends seem more attractive than the pictures. The title is misleading: the book is about the cytology of the CSF and not of the central nervous system (CNS).

Although a significant proportion of the material has been presented in original form elsewhere, this book is in general a valuable collection of well-presented reviews. Its coverage of some basic scientific aspects and of studies of CSF dynamics in man probably justifies the substantial price.

AJ STRONG

References


This multi-author book has the flavour of a manuscript resulting from a conference, although this is not stated as being the case. Most of the chapters are followed by another author's commentary; very few of these are critical enough to be of value. The major topics covered are: the clinical features of childhood spinal muscular atrophy; genetics; electromyography, imaging, and muscle hi-