Book reviews

tion with more detailed CT images will soon be forthcoming.

BRIAN KENDALL

Cerebral Vascular Disease 4. World Federation of Neurology 11th Salzburg Conference. Excerpta Medica International Congress Series 616.

Edited by JS Meyer H Lechner M Reivich and EO Ott. (Pp 311; \$76.50.) Amsterdam: Elsevier Biomedical Press BV, 1983.

This book contains the Bertha Memorial Lecture and fifty-three papers selected for presentation at the 11th World Federation of Neurology Meeting held in Salzburg in September 1982. The papers are divided into five sections covering Regulation of Cerebral Blood Flow and Risk Factors, Neuroimaging Techniques, Critical Evaluation of Therapeutic Approaches, Cerebral Perfusion and Metabolism in Relation to Function, and Migraine.

In the Bertha Memorial Lecture Sokoloff outlines the principles behind the 2-deoxy-D-glucose method of studying glucose metabolism and illustrates the impressive results obtained by autoradiography in studying the close coupling between local functional activity and local glucose metabolism. For example, in the rat, the rates of glucose utilisation in the primary projection areas of the retina are directly proportional to the logarithm of the intensity of retinal illumination. The deoxy-glucose method can now be applied to man using positron emission tomography (PET) though the resolution is lower than that obtained by autoradiography. Using this method WD Heiss *et al* have shown reduced cerebral metabolism distant to the site of infarction and suggest that in part this is due to deafferentation. Other papers emphasise the ability of PET to demonstrate the dynamic changes in blood flow and regional metabolism occurring after acute infarction.

Nearly one fifth of the papers are concerned with the measurement of cerebral blood flow (CBF). The normal decline with age is enhanced in subjects with risk factors for cerebro-vascular disease and the "hyperfrontal" distribution declines with age and in patients with Parkinson's disease. In rhesus monkeys autoregulation in the vertebral arterial system is less efficient than in the carotid system, which may be of beneficial effect in protecting against hypotension (M Tomita *et al*).

In the neuroimaging section it is perhaps surprising that there is only one paper on

nuclear magnetic resonance imaging. Venous digital subtraction angiography (DSA) and Doppler techniques in the study of carotid disease are discussed in three papers, but only in one are they compared with conventional angiography. DSA fails to identify lesions in a small proportion of cases, whereas Doppler studies tend to overestimate the presence of disease.

Whether aspirin is of benefit to patients who have sustained a TIA is still unclear. The French "AICLA" study provides evidence that aspirin may be of benefit in preventing re-infarction in patients with minor completed strokes. Other papers discuss circulating platelet aggregates in patients with vascular disease and others concentrate on the inhibition of platelet aggregation by low and high dose aspirin therapy and by other drugs.

Sjaastad *et al* provide an interesting review of chronic paroxysmal hemicrania and compare the autonomic disturbances that further identify it as a separate entity to cluster headache. The relationship between changes in CBF during a classical migraine attack and the spreading depression of Leao is discussed.

This book is worth browsing through, though the price is against adding it to ones own bookshelf. Although many of the papers are short and lacking in detail, and much of the data have been published elsewhere, in some cases since the conference, the wide range of topics covered is likely to include something of interest for all.

D HILTON-JONES

Intervertebral Disk Diseases: Causes, Diagnosis, Treatment and Prophylaxis. By Jurgen Kramer. (Pp 221; £36.00.) UK: Year Book Medical Publishers Ltd, 1981.

This book is a translation of a work by a Dusseldorf orthopaedic surgeon. It sets out to provide a comprehensive account of disease of the intervertebral discs at all levels of the spine. It is beautifully produced and illustrated and contains much useful basic information, especially about the anatomy and physiology of the vertebral column and associated structures. Having said this, however, this reviewer must confess that he did not find this a satisfactory book. It is written in an awkward style that often requires several readings for one to be able to grasp the meaning of a passage. Whether this is a reflection of the German original text or is due to an inept translation is difficult to say. The use of a number of terms and concepts unfamiliar to the

English-speaking reader does not make the task of following the text any easier. Furthermore this book lacks sufficient critical appraisal of the problems of diagnosis, assessment and management that are involved in a busy spinal practice. Much of the book is written in a rather dogmatic tone that is not really appropriate in a field where many accepted practices are not based on firmly established information and where their efficacy is to some extent dependent on a correct assessment of the personal circumstances of the individual patient. For instance there is no real discussion of the interaction between psychological factors and the physical symptoms of spinal degenerative disease. Even the discussion of such topics as the indications for exploring a lumbar disc protrusion, or the results of lumbar disc surgery, are simply not adequate either for the beginner in the field or for the experienced spinal specialist. Sadly this reviewer found this monograph disappointing and cannot recommend it, especially in view of its not inconsiderable price.

RS MAURICE-WILLIAMS

Management of Head Injuries. By Bryan Jennett & Graham Teasdale (Pp 351; £38.50.) Philadelphia: FA Davis Co, 1981.

This is a most important publication on head injuries; it contains the experience, results and conclusions of the Glasgow team presented as one might expect in an eminently logical and readable fashion. The title should be taken in its widest context as it covers more than medical in-patient treatment. The first chapters are devoted to epidemiology, pathology and patho-physiology; the text of these chapters is simple and comprehensive. The following chapters are concerned with the clinical investigation, assessment and treatment of head injured patients with particular reference to the Glasgow experience with international comparisons. These chapters are particularly eloquent and aspects of the "aggressive" treatment of head injuries such as intracranial pressure monitoring, ventilation, steroids and barbiturates are objectively discussed. The illustrations and diagrams are in black and white and, surely, the next edition will be improved by the introduction of fourth generation CT Scans and perhaps also NMR and PET images. Chapter 9 is concerned with the management of acute injuries and this should be compulsory

reading in every casualty department. The final chapters are concerned with the prognosis and neurological and psychiatric sequelae in the widest possible social context. The final chapter is particularly important as the authors assess the overall care of head injuries internationally and suggest that we could do better in the United Kingdom. This book forms the solid basis for managing head injuries; it, like the Glasgow Coma Scale, should be read and applied by neurosurgeons, trauma specialists, medical students and nurses.

CHARLES DAVIS

Intradiscal Therapy: Chymopapain or Collagenase. By Mark D Brown. (Pp 173; £44.00). Oxford: Blackwell Scientific Publications, 1983.

Intradiscal enzyme therapy for lumbar disc disease has a controversial history over the past 20 years but chymopapain has recently been re-licensed in the USA so this is a timely review of both that history and the current status. As one would expect from Mark Brown this is a clearly written, comprehensive and balanced presentation of the present state of intradiscal therapy. Despite the author's limited personal series of chymopapain he is one of the few surgeons who also has experience of using collagenase and this in fact frees him to provide an independent, unbiased view. As a convinced user of chymopapain I approached this book feeling it would be of interest only to a few highly specialised practitioners but I finished it feeling that all doctors concerned with the management of low back disorders should be aware of its contents. I can only support Mark Brown's conclusion that intradiscal therapy is now a proven dramatic breakthrough in the treatment of disc prolapse and this is the best presently available book to read.

GORDON WADDELL

Psychiatry Revision: Aids for Postgraduate Trainees. By Dorcas Bird, Jonathan Bird and Glynn Harrison. (Pp 352; £6.00.) Edinburgh: Churchill Livingstone, 1982.

This book is a response to the examinations used to test the suitability of candidates for membership of the Royal College of Psychiatrists and for higher training for consultant status in the NHS. It pitilessly

reveals the inadequacy of the examinations in assessing professional competence in a field which is not purely technical and which requires the development of skill and judgement. Nevertheless, the hurdles have been set up, and the authors have set out to help the runners get over them. How well have they succeeded?

Possibly the most useful part of the book for the examinee will be Section Two—"Hints on taking psychiatric examinations." This section gives general advice on the various types of multiple choice question and how they must be tackled; on writing essays giving the old and sound advice—read the questions carefully and answer it and nothing else; on the clinical examination—what is expected and how it is done; and on the structure of and approach to the oral examination.

Then follow three large sections with many examples on multiple choice questions, case history questions, and essay questions. Of the three, the first is probably the most valuable as it demonstrates the ways in which Multiple Choice Questions may be constructed; the second contains some useful material; and the third shows why essay questions are so difficult to mark.

Many candidates will find this book useful in their revision; all three major sections cover the field broadly and bring together information which candidates will find helpful. As far as it goes the book is well done, but if this book accurately reflects the desired end point of psychiatric training, it is an indictment of that procedure. How right the College has been to emphasise the importance of the process of training and of close supervision in clinical work; only in this context can books of this kind be seen in their proper place, in assisting the hapless candidate negotiate the course.

RHS MINDHAM

A Time to Speak. By Valerie Eaton Griffith, Patricia Oetliker and Prue Oswin. Foreword by Prof Bernard Isaacs MD, FRCP. (Pp 82; £3.00.) London: The Chest, Heart and Stroke Association, 1983.

It has now become more generally accepted that volunteers have a role to play in the management of the aphasic patient. It is apparent that there is little information that is suitable for the interested lay person

who wishes to know more about the speech and language disorders that follow stroke. Therefore, this book is timely and will be welcomed not only by volunteer organisers but by speech therapists who work closely with volunteers. The style of the book has been carefully considered and would appeal to the least academic reader. It demonstrates how, with a little imagination and interest, one can expand and stimulate language activities with this grossly handicapped population. Furthermore, it would encourage even the most timorous volunteer to take a positive attitude and be confident with regard to what they can achieve.

The main reservation is that it does not give clear enough information about the nature of the speech and language disorders following stroke and their associated problems. It is regretted that the volunteer will have to look elsewhere for this information which would make the interpretation of the reactions of patients to different materials so much more meaningful. Additionally, the methods of selecting suitable materials for particular patients is covered too briefly.

The work of the authors is testimony to their sincerity and interest. It is unfortunate that the interaction between speech therapy and volunteers is not discussed more fully in the book. In fact, speech therapy is barely mentioned and it is regrettable that some lay people may not realise the role that professional help may have.

The authors are to be congratulated for offering such fresh, dynamic impetus in this area and one hopes that the next edition will expand on more of the technical aspects which will increase understanding and co-operation between the lay and professional careers in this field.

PM ENDERBY, R LANGTON HEWITT