Book reviews

Flor-Henry's ideas may be unfamiliar to some readers. His most important contribution to knowledge was a study of epileptic psychosis, published in 1969. He found that patients with left temporal lobe epilepsy tended to have a schizophrenic picture to the psychosis while those with right-sided lesions tended to have a depressive or manic illness. This paved the way for numerous studies on lateralised hemispheric dysfunction in endogenous psychosis—clinical, pathological, radiological, electrophysiological and neuropsychological. At the present time the state of knowledge can only be described as chaotic. Flor-Henry has always championed the idea that *left hemisphere dysfunction underlies schizophrenia and right hemisphere dysfunction affective disorders*. This is almost certainly wrong, but Flor-Henry's importance is not his insistence on the precise form but a general appreciation that hemispheric imbalance of some sort is involved.

I would strongly recommend both neurologists and psychiatrists to buy this book, though at £35, it is not cheap. It is, in my view, the first genuine attempt for 100 years to close the gap between neurology and psychiatry.

It should be said that Flor-Henry is not the best advocate of his own case. He is prone to flight of ideas and overinclusion of evidence which detract from his main theme. Statements such as "One could view hysteria as an attenuated *forme fruste* of schizophrenia in the female" are unsupported. He also has a tendency to misquote others' work to suit his argument. This is a pity because he only alienates the discerning reader.

In my view classical schizophrenia is more likely to be an effect of right hemisphere dysfunction, and a paranoid-hallucinatory psychosis caused by left temporal damage. These details are not so important at the present time as the recruitment of interest into the whole subject of hemisphere imbalance and psychosis. Flor-Henry can at least take the credit for this.

J CUTTING

Fish's Schizophrenia—Third Edition. Edited by Max Hamilton. (Pp 236; £10.95.) Bristol: PSG Wright, 1984.

Professor Fish's monograph has long been valued by English-speaking readers for its distillation of the views of many leading

German psychiatrists and philosophers. Although some of this now has more of a historical than an immediate interest, the clinical observations, and the ideas behind them, are still relevant to present day practice. In this volume, some of the material has been succinctly updated by the editor and we are still left with a considerable exposition of the phenomenology of schizophrenia and its classification, with particular reference to the writings of Kleist, Leonhard and Conrad. In addition, there is a chapter on "Theories of Causation" with an extensive discussion of existentialism and schizophrenia. Professor Hamilton, rightly regarding this chapter as "unique", also seems to rate it as something of a museum piece, to the extent of letting it stand, leaving Jung to be discussed as though he was still alive.

While no longer a complete guide to current practice, this book continued to make its special contribution to the literature on schizophrenia.

JLT BIRLEY

Anxiolytics: Neurochemical, Behavioural, and Clinical Perspectives. Edited by Jeffrey B Malick, SJ Enna and Henry I Yamamura. (Pp 232; \$48.36.) New York: Raven Press, 1982.

Anxiolytic drugs are so widely used it is perhaps not surprising that so many books on this topic have been published in recent years. However, it is the major advances made in the understanding of the mechanism of action of anxiolytics, particularly benzodiazepines, that have stimulated so much interest. The initial discovery of the benzodiazepine receptor and its linkage to the GABA receptor complex provided a neuronal basis for their pharmacological effects. Latterly, the search has been on for the endogenous ligand for these receptors with numerous putative transmitters being proposed; current interest centres around the involvement of B-carbolines. The present volume attempts to present a current view of anxiolytic drug action. It is a well balanced volume which discusses in detail the classical view of benzodiazepine action via GABAergic mechanism but which gives space to the action of these drugs on other neuronal systems including dopamine. The emphasis on basic research in this area is highlighted by the nine chapters dealing with pharmacology compared to the two clinical chapters. Even here interest is mainly confined to the potential abuse of these substances. Inevitably any

book dealing with a subject which is expanding as rapidly as anxiolytic research will be somewhat dated. Nevertheless, as a reference background volume the book is well worth reading. As part of a series of volumes dealing with different classes of centrally acting drugs it will provide a useful addition to libraries.

P JENNER

Minute Eye Movement and Brain Stem Function. By Davis Coakley. (Pp 112; \$46.00.) Florida: CRC Press Inc, 1983.

This book is based on the author's MD thesis and is concerned with the value of quantifying ocular microtremor (minute oscillations of the lobe due to unfused muscle twitch contractions) as an index of the integrity of brainstem function. The first half of the book reviews the physiology of eye movement, methods of recording microtremor and the characteristics of normal records. The latter half describes the author's own investigations of the characteristics of microtremor during sleep, anaesthesia and in brain damage and compares the findings with other means of assessing brainstem function. At first sight the book is a model of layout with excellent illustrations and would appear to be a unique, comprehensive survey of the clinical aspects of ocular microtremor. Unfortunately there are serious omissions relating to the origin and interpretation of microtremor. Of most importance is that the author has neglected the problem that brainstem insults may selectively destroy oculomotor structures involved in the generation of microtremor, without affecting other sensorimotor functions or level of consciousness. This means that alteration in microtremor may correlate with widespread brainstem injury but not necessarily *vice versa*. This is possibly a serious drawback to the use of microtremor as an index of brainstem function and should have been discussed at length. Reflecting this inadequacy, the review of the physiology of brainstem oculomotor and premotor structures is at best, scanty and little attempt is made to correlate changes in microtremor with lesions of brainstem structures related to eye movements. In addition the text omits technical information which is important to the evaluation of the technique. Of note are the absence of explanation of the methods of spectral analysis used to quantify microtremor; the absence of discussion of how to deal with contamination of the recordings by spontaneous

macroscopic eye movements and lack of explanation and justification of the numerous statistical tests which clutter up the text. In conclusion this book could not be considered to be a teaching text because it neglects the problematic aspects of interpreting microtremor; however, it is of value as a source of references and an account of the author's considerable, everyday experiences with the technique.

MICHAEL GRESTY

Actual Problems in Multiple Sclerosis Research. Edited by Ejner Pedersen, Jorgen Clausen and Lis Oades. (Pp 409; D.kr. 434-42.) Copenhagen: FADL's Forlag, 1983.

This beautifully illustrated monograph examines the hypothesis that the chronic relapsing form of experimental allergic encephalomyelitis (EAE) provides a satisfactory model for multiple sclerosis (MS). The evidence depends largely on the histological resemblance of these conditions. Clinicians interested in the pathogenesis of MS will find the similarities and differences lucidly explained and clearly depicted. Acute ordinary EAE elicited with nervous tissue or myelin basic protein is an acute monophasic encephalomyelitis with little demyelination. However, the chronic relapsing form elicited in rats or guinea pigs, but most reproducibly in guinea pigs of one particular inbred strain (13), is characterised by the development of large demyelinated plaques with eventual gliosis which bear comparison with chronic MS. The authors refer more briefly to the spectrum of human demyelinating disease through acute perivenous leukoencephalitis, acute and chronic MS, regarding published cases of post-rabies vaccine encephalomyelitis and one case of inadvertent human EAE as resembling acute MS. The burden of the monograph is that the essential histological features of MS are reproduced by one or other form of EAE. These include initial perivenous inflammatory cell infiltration, increased vascular permeability, demyelination, remyelination and gliosis. The fate of the oligodendrocytes in EAE and MS plaques is difficult to ascertain since conclusive electron microscopic identification of oligodendrocytes depends on the demonstration of processes in continuity with myelin lamellae which are lost, by definition, in demyelinated lesions. In the active lesions of chronic EAE Lassmann

depicts both intact oligodendrocytes and cells resembling oligodendrocytes which are degenerating concluding that such damage is incidental to the main attack on myelin. The material from MS brains is relatively poorly fixed. Lassmann avoids depicting "oligodendrocytes" therein but he does discuss the controversial issue of what happens to the oligodendrocytes in the acute lesions, favouring the interpretation that these cells survive at least in the early stages of plaque formation. This issue deserves further examination as immunohistochemical techniques for identifying oligodendrocytes improve.

Clinicians and societies sponsoring research into multiple sclerosis could provide a real service by making necropsy material available for study as soon after death as possible to resolve this and other issues. Surprisingly good fixation can be achieved if central nervous system material is properly dissected and fixed in glutaraldehyde for electron microscopy. Snap frozen material may be needed for immunohistochemical staining of cell membrane antigens but as techniques improve paraffin and even plastic embedded sections are being used.

The inconclusive literature concerning fluctuations of blood, CSF and brain lymphocyte subpopulations and EAE and MS is ignored. The elusive nature of the antigen (s) causing chronic relapsing EAE is briefly discussed but the central issue of what precipitates the autoimmune state in MS is not addressed and chronic virological models of demyelinating disease are not compared with EAE. Discussion of these subjects would admittedly be speculative at present and this monograph does provide a solid basis of neuropathological fact on which the present and future generations of research into demyelinating disease will depend.

RAC HUGHES

Oncology of the Nervous System. (Cancer Treatment and Research Series). Edited by Michael D Walker. (Pp 424; \$69.50.) The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1983.

This multi-author monograph, which forms part of a series on cancer research and treatment, provides an interesting and useful survey of the current state of research and treatment of brain tumours.

An introductory chapter on the epidemiology of central nervous system tumours is followed by a review of animal brain tumour models, and other chapters

cover basic concepts of chemotherapy and radiotherapy. Immunological aspects of gliomas are considered in a chapter dealing with the literature up to 1981, and there is a brief controversial chapter on the possible therapeutic implications of dietary manipulation of amino acid utilisation by gliomas. These chapters are balanced by practical clinical reviews of the use of chemotherapy, radiotherapy, and surgery in glioma management, and there is also a succinct chapter dealing with the surgical treatment of pituitary tumours. The role of steroids in the management of primary and metastatic brain tumours is also covered, and there is a good account of the pathological effects of chemotherapy.

The depressing state of malignant brain tumour management is all too apparent to any reader of this monograph, but the editor, Dr Walker deserves credit for enlisting so many competent authors, and most neurologists and neurosurgeons who can find time to dip into this volume will find something to interest them.

ALAN RIDLEY

Motor Neuron Disorder. Deficiency of Arterial Blood Supply to Spinal Cord and Brain Stem. By Patrick Stortebecker. (Pp 166; \$20.00.) Stockholm: Stortebeck Foundation for Research, 1983.

This title is a misnomer as the book is about motor neuron disease. The author who was an associate professor in neurology at the Karolinska Hospital in Stockholm, reviews the various aetiological theories namely, traumatic, toxic, neoplastic, infective, metabolic, and makes a strong plea for an all-embracing vascular basis.

Although that is not a new theory, the book is useful as a review and for its bibliography but the evidence is eclectic and not persuasive. The printing is poor and the writing could have been improved by an editor whose mother tongue is English. This book is too idiosyncratic to merit recommendation except as another stimulus to discover more about this puzzling and tragic disease.

F CLIFFORD ROSE