
This slim volume is particularly welcome to clinicians and researchers in the field, as the contributions of the various authorities effectively pull together the available information on this most confusing area. The area is confusing both to basic scientists who find profound species differences in the physiology and pharmacology of the lower urinary tract, and to clinicians who have become aware that here the sympathetic nerves do not serve a simple function and do not work in a simple way; there are important sex differences and important cotransmitters.

Evidence has for some years been accumulating (and is here reviewed) that ACh, ATP and various peptides are released by pelvic sympathetic nerves in addition to NA, and modulate sympathetic adrenergic and parasympathetic cholinergic nerve function as well as possessing important independent actions of their own; and that the smooth muscles involved carry a range of receptor types. Furthermore, in human material there is evidence that disorders of lower urinary function caused for example by outflow obstruction or spinal cord injury can cause significant tertiary alterations in receptor populations and autonomic nerve function. All this has important implications for practical drug therapy, particularly in disorders of urinary voiding.

Among the 12 substantive contributions there is a good balance of clinical and academic departments: five emanate from departments of urology, two each from departments of anatomy and pharmacology, and one each from a clinical MRC unit, a spinal injuries unit and Pitzers (who organised the one-day workshop in April 1985 from which the book is derived). There is not a dud amongst them, and each is of the nature of a review of an area where the authors can also contribute personal experience. The contributions are well referenced and there is an index. As is so often the case, the verbatim discussions, which were no doubt meaningful at the time, are disappointing to a reader, who will have his own questions which he cannot ask!

IEC ORMEROD


The Guarantors of Brain have done a great service by issuing a new edition of this classical slim monograph. The previous version, which was thoroughly revised between 1972 and 1975, has been modified and a new diagram of the lumbo-sacral plexus has been included. It is worth recalling the history that led to the production of this indispensable volume, that has guided neurologists for many years. One can do no better than to quote the Preface of the present volume: "In 1940 Dr George Riddoch was Consultant Neurologist to the Army. He realised the necessity of providing centres to deal with peripheral nerve injuries during the war. In collaboration with Professor Learmonth, Professor of Surgery at the University of Edinburgh, peripheral nerve injury centres were established at Gogarburn near Edinburgh and at Killearn near Glasgow. Professor Learmonth wished to have an illustrated guide on peripheral nerve injuries for the use of surgeons working in general hospitals. In collaboration with Dr Ritchie Russell, a few photographs demonstrating the testing of individual muscles were taken in 1941, but Dr Ritchie Russell returned to Oxford in 1942 and was replaced by Dr McArdle, Neurologist to Scottish Command. The photographs were completed by Dr McArdle at Gogarburn with the help of the Department of Medical Illustration at the University of Edinburgh. About 20 copies in loose-leaf form were circulated to surgeons in Scotland.

In 1943 Professor Learmonth and Dr Riddoch added the diagrams illustrating the innervation of muscles by various peripheral nerves modified from Pitres and Testut, also the diagrams of cutaneous sensory distributions and dermatomes. This work was published by the Medical Research Council in 1943 as Aids to the Investigation of Peripheral Nerve Injuries (War Memorandum No 7). It became a standard work and over the next 30 years many thousands of copies were printed. This new edition can be obtained from Holt-Saunders Ltd., 1 St Ann's Road, Eastbourne, East Sussex BN21 3UN UK.

CD MARSSEN


This estimable monograph describes linguistic syndromes following stroke and is rich in clinical and pathological detail and embellished by shrewd observation clearly based on practical experience in addition to a critical command of the aphasia literature. The author uses the anatomically based Wernicke-Lichtheil model of aphasia as a framework on which to build a more linguistically detailed syndrome classification together with precise anatomical correlative data. Due emphasis is placed on the changes in language during recovery from vascular aphasia and the difficulties in correlating aspects of linguistic breakdown with lesions of the cortex, subcortex and often inevitably both.

The book has much to offer all disciplines converging on aphasiology and is equally informative to neurologists already familiar with the approach to aphasia contained in the writings of the late Norman Geschwind and Frank D Benson. The level of linguistic description is pleasingly lucid and within the competence of the neurologist who may find psycholinguistic literature a major challenge to his comprehension.

D NEARY

Book reviews