
This is another symposium publication. It is based on a meeting held in Missouri in September 1986, sponsored by the St Louis VA Geriatric Research, Education and Clinical Center. It presents "information on the current state of knowledge of age-related neuropsychiatric disorders, neurodegenerative diseases, stroke, and molecular and cellular changes in the aging brain. Rather than providing a general overview ... selected topics in which significant advances have recently been made are examined in detail." It covers many clinical and experimental observations of Alzheimer's disease, it reviews pseudo-dementia, tardive dyskinesia, intervention in acute stroke, aging and sleep apnoea as well as papers devoted to molecular biology and membrane structure.

The clinical sections will be of interest to physicians, yet being in varying degrees discursive and expository these contributions are uneven and in many ways are less than satisfactory. The editors could have tried to link or harmonise the various sections to make for a more digestible text with at least some continuation theme.

There is an authoritative summary of the pathology of Alzheimer's disease, Parkinson's disease and ALS degenerations by Hirano, based on his Guam work. A survey of imaging details the technical principles of PET, MRI and SPECT scanning but experience in dementia and Parkinsonian states does not yet allow of any useful clinical inferences. The section on tardive dyskinesia provides a pharmacologist's view without giving deductions or experience to influence the treatment or prevention. There is a stimulating chapter on tran-synaptic degeneration by Burke et al who consider both forward and retrograde neuronal delay, the latter invoking the post-synaptic receptor site as the primary lesion in Alzheimer's disease.

The basic science section is in some ways the most interesting, and certainly to the clinician the most informative. And yet, the necessary leap between the scientist and the patient is not made: there is spare mention of disease, pathological processes and almost none of clinical issues in these sections which thus appear divorced and remote from the other chapters.

The publishers have chosen to use two faces of varying styles and of varying density and size. The margins are raged rather than justified and though clearly legible the appearance is congested and distinctly unattractive. Had this been achieved in the interests of rapid publication of the symposium within a six month period, it might have been excusable. Neurological readers—by their cautionary advice to purchasing librarians and with their own discretion in pulling out their own chequebooks will no doubt convey the general view of the current pretentious trend to the publication of each and every small meeting.

LINDSAY SYMON


This book, as so many others these days, is the product of a symposium, and, therefore, must be expected to be patchy. It has, however, considerable merit. It brings together authoritative papers on the anatomy from a variety of European authors notably in France and in Vienna whose particular interest is the cavernous sinus, with a detailed chapter on the cavernous sinus by Dwight Parkinson, one of the first to suggest that this area was in fact open to surgical interference. These chapters are amongst the best in the book. Also to be commended are the series of chapters, although of very varied quality on intravascular techniques which are now widely accepted.

The review of surgical techniques is perhaps a little less happy, although the stress placed upon the collaboration between surgeons of various disciplines is welcome and reflects the increased realisation that collaboration between neurosurgeons and their plastic, surgical and ENT colleagues is the way in which the subject may be advanced.

There are several papers on the management of aneurysms actually within the cavernous sinus which represent a distinct surgical advance and an interesting review of the world's literature on trigeminal neurona curiously appended to the report of a single case.

The book contains many illustrations and is some 419 pages long including a rather incomplete index. It will be of value to those who in the first place can afford the considerable cost (nearly £80 in British money), but who will welcome the outstanding chapters mentioned above with their profuse references. Its place, however, is likely to be in departmental rather than in individual libraries because of its cost.

K R MILLS


This volume follows 7 years after the authors' excellent first edition and is divided into four parts Physiology and Pharmacology, Basic Considerations, Clinical Neuroanaesthesia, and Intensive Care. The reader is provided with a comprehensive, well written review of current literature integrated with thoughtful discussion of controversial issues incorporating the 50 years combined neuroanaesthetic experience of the authors. The chapters on clinical neuroanaesthesia particularly benefit from clear descriptions of the authors' experiences and clinical techniques, although the latter flavour the book towards the European market. There is an excellent reference section at the end of each chapter, a comprehensive subject index, and a reasonable cross referencing between different parts of the book. The text contains few typographical errors but the CT scans have not reproduced well and might benefit from adjacent labelled line diagrams.