epitomised by the contribution on experimental autoimmune myasthenia gravis in which attention can now shift to documenting in detail possibilities for the pathogenesis at each stage in the sequence of events that leads to tissue damage. Immunological models of motor neuron disease have become legitimate material for inclusion in a book of this kind—although the evidence from studying the disease itself, presented later in the book, is a bit thin—but orthodox neuroimmunologists may have to hold on to their seats when considering the immunology of dyslexia.

The third section deals with the big three neuroimmunological diseases of the nervous system. The chapters on demyelinating disease are not so much disappointing, as predictable. The veteran troupe of distinguished commentators pulls no new tricks out of the bag in rounding up the usual suspects. The importance of the blood brain barrier in permitting inflammatory and demyelinating events to occur in the central nervous system is again emphasised but the role of trauma in this sequence is less plausibly argued. Most citations in the chapter on acute disseminated encephalomyelitis are from the literature of 20 or more years ago, reflecting the increasing rarity of this prototypic immunologically mediated demyelinating disease; the new material is mostly concerned with general ideas on mechanisms of demyelination. The comprehensive accounts of the neuropathy associated with IgM paraproteinaemia, and humoral mechanisms of tissue damage in Guillain Barré polyneuropathy each illustrate that, as in the Lambert Eaton syndrome, immunotherapy has itself provided important clues to pathogenesis through the process of reverse immunology.

It is clear that not everything has yet been learned about myasthenia gravis: the aetiology remains obscure and the synthesis offered here could equally have concluded an account of multiple sclerosis. The chapter devoted to immunological disorders involving the thymus, necessarily focuses on myasthenia gravis, but not to the exclusion of other conditions which will interest neuroimmunologists. Some contributors lean heavily on their own research, as for example in the account of polymyositis, whereas other have written more general reviews. The danger of the former approach is that the same theme tends to be repeated; suppressor phenotype and function in samples recovered both from the circulation and affected tissue feature prominently in the discussion of multiple sclerosis, myasthenia gravis, polymyositis and myotonic dystrophy. Finally, in this section, there is a lucid account of the success and failure in the eye's attempts to maintain its immunological privilege.

The next part lists a heterogenous collection of conditions which the editors presumably thought fit to separate from the more established neuroimmunological diseases. There is a thorough account of borreliosis, and new thoughts on cerebral lupus—again emphasising the dissociation between clinical and serological evidence for disease activity and stressing the role of anti-phospholipid antibodies in causing tissue damage. The chapter on glioma fails to mention monoclonal antibody therapy, and the account of paraneoplastic disorders, whilst listing all the conditions recognised to have an immunological basis, is poorly referenced and omits most of the original publications. The interaction between genes, epilepsy, phenytoin and IgA deficiency is discussed by one of the editors who concludes this section with a brief account of neurological complications of immunodeficiency, a topic which would of course now justify an entire monograph of its own. The inevitable rate at which a book of this kind gets out of date is also demonstrated by the relative lack of molecular biology—a deficiency remedied in the chapter on narcolepsy, surely one of the most unlikely disorders to have taken pole position in the HLA and disease stakes. Seemingly, the notion of lymphocytes lulling the reticulum formation to sleep has given way to a less immunological concept of MHC molecules acting as receptor for transmitters involved in wakefulness.

The catalogue of laboratory tests available for investigating neuroimmunological disease, which follows, is useful but anyone actually wanting to apply one or other technique will need a more detailed recipe book; the value of investigating the cerebrospinal fluid as a peepshow on what is going on in the brain itself is authoritatively described but, although it is undoubtedly one of the major achievements of modern neuroscience, imaging of the nervous system fits a little uncomfortably into this book. Treatment is dealt with as and when it arises in discussion of the individual diseases, but the book ends with accounts of the complementary roles of immune suppression and stimulation, emphasising the in vitro actions of each drug, a little immunophenosophy, and futuristic strategies for treatment. It is inevitable that a multi-authored book which sets out to be encyclopaedic in its coverage of the subject, will be something of a curate's egg but, for the moment, this is the definitive text on neuroimmunology.

DAS COMPSTON


The essence of this book is a description of the lives of children with temporal lobe epilepsy. It may be divided into three parts: a prospective study of 100 children with epilepsy; an assessment of surgical treatment; and a discussion in the pathogenesis of partial epilepsy.

The book is remarkable in that it provides excellent follow up data over nearly 40 years with no subjects lost. The development of each case is viewed not in terms of the seizure disorder but in terms of the patient as an individual. For example schooling, psychosexual, domestic and employment progress were monitored. The results of the studies are clearly presented and well illustrated by case reports.

In spite of these very good points the prospective study of children with epilepsy is of limited applicability. The authors repeatedly state that the patients were "unselected", although I think that the entry requirements would introduce a bias towards more severe cases. Indeed, 67% had a clearly identifiable aetiology and only 32% became seizure free and independent.

The chapters on neurosurgical treatment are well written and provide a useful assessment of hemispherectomy in 18 patients and temporal lobectomy in 65 patients. Again it is important to view outcome in relation to patient selection. For example, 30 of the temporal lobectomy patients had mesial sclerosis, which, as Jean Aicardi states in the foreword, is unlikely to occur in contemporary series. The chapter on pathogenesis is a reprint from an earlier "Clinic in Developmental Medicine". It remains interesting and is appropriate to the scope of the book.

In conclusion, this book is easily read and provides an interesting perspective on the effect of temporal lobe epilepsy on the lives of a group of children. However, much of the prognostic information may be of limited applicability.

D FISH


This edition is larger than the first and covers a wider range of newer techniques. The gen-