

The section of six chapters on epilepsy provides useful up to the minute accounts of seizure prophylaxis, when to discontinue anticonvulsants, and indications for surgical treatment. Although reviews of these topics can be found scattered in the literature, the selection of chapters in this book cover the main problem areas in epilepsy and their perusal would provide most neurologists with some useful nuggets of information.

The three chapters on movement disorders are the least successful in the volume. Adrenal transplants in Parkinson's disease is now clearly known to be of no therapeutic value, and the chapter on neural transplantation is, by the very nature of the speed of progress in this field, out of date. The final chapter in this trio competently deals with the management of the refractory Parkinsonian patient. Other sections deal with brain tumours (3 chapters) and intensive care neurology (2 chapters).

As a form of postgraduate education for neurologists I would strongly recommend this anthology, but could not advocate personal purchase by neurologists because of its high cost. Rather it would make a useful addition to the Department Library when I expect it will frequently change hands.

CHRISTOPHER KENNARD

**Principles of Geriatric Neurology.** (Contemporary Neurology Series). Edited by R KATZMAN AND JW ROWE. (Pp 368; Price: £57.50). 1992. Philadelphia, F A Davies & Co. U.K. Distrib: Williams & Wilkins Ltd, London. ISBN 0-8036-5232-1.

This book begins well by introducing issues which are specifically relevant to the neurology of old age—for example, the distinction between “healthy” and “impaired” elderly people, and between age-related and age-dependent disease. Other useful chapters in a similar vein are those on the neurological consultation at age 80, on falls and gait disorders, incontinence, and on ethics. However, some of the material seems out of place in a relatively short book which is addressed to a wide audience. The textbook writers' vice is to prefer comprehensiveness to common sense. It is hardly sensible to give Steele Richardson syndrome almost as much (or as little) space as Parkinson's disease, or to give PET scanning so much attention in a neuroimaging chapter, while giving scant guidance on pragmatic issues such as the sensitivity, specificity and cost-effectiveness of routinely available techniques. The statement on p. 84 that “the CT scan has revolutionized the diagnosis of dementia” is slightly misleading (and no less so when the same paragraph is repeated, verbatim, on p. 179, but with a different reference cited).

The avowed emphasis of the book is on dementias but imbalance is a problem here, too. The diagnostic assessment of dementias dominates chapters on neuroimaging and on psychometry, and occupies 25 of 29 pages of a chapter on diagnosis and management. This chapter is followed, in a slightly awkward sequence, by a detailed review of the basic neurobiology of Alzheimer's disease (with 367 references). There are less than four pages on management of the dementias. Most space is devoted to treatment of concurrent medical

problems such as hypothyroidism. Discussion of experimental drug treatments is cursory and undocumented. One would hope for guidance on the involvement of the neurologist in multidisciplinary management and for some discussion of support services such as day centres and respite care facilities. Unfortunately the ordinary reality of Alzheimer's and other similar dementias, as they are experienced by the vast majority of patients and families, is inadequately considered in this book.

The book implies that the “role of the physician” in Alzheimer's disease largely involves deploying expensive technologies and elaborate tests in the pursuit of unlikely alternative diagnoses.

Overall, the reader is left with a rather conventional, and thus incomplete, image of old age neurology as a clinical activity.

CHRISTOPHER D WARD

**Inherited Ataxias** (Advances in Neurology Series, Vol 61). Edited by AE HARDING AND T DEUFEL. (Pp 217; Price: \$119.00). 1992. New York, Raven Press. ISBN 0-88167-965-8.

Inherited Ataxias provides a comprehensive account of diagnostic, neurochemical, genetic and experimental advances. The sonorous ‘olivopontocerebellar atrophy’ has long since been abbreviated to the acronym OPCA with numerous subtypes. Even so I was surprised to find that the use of a hyphen in ataxia-telangiectasia required tactful comment alongside the immunological, cytogenetic and radiosensitivity abnormalities of AT cells. The hyphenated eponym, Louis-Barr disease, has been sunk without trace and we are now required to understand “complementation” of various mutations. Molecular genetics are achieving increasing importance in defining clinical entities and even modern variants such as Machado-Joseph disease and Spastic Ataxia of Charlevoix-Saguenay are liable to disappear.

Anyone reading that “despite their rarity, the inherited prion diseases are the best understood neurodegenerative disorders” will realise they must view the inherited ataxias in a new light. Indeed, elsewhere in the book, as though by virtual reality, they are guided through the cellular architectonics of the cerebellar cortex; can memorize, if they so wish, the individualized neurotransmitters and neuropeptide systems of each cell type, and understand the projected role of second messenger systems concerned with intracellular transmission and homeostasis. That this multi-author, multinational book succeeds for the clinician owes much to the skill with which it has been collated and edited.

EMR CRITCHLEY

**Parkinson's Disease** (Series: 100 Maxims in Neurology, Vol 2). By JG NUTT, JP HAMMERSTAD AND ST GANCHER. (Pp 169; Price: £24.50). 1992. Sevenoaks, Edward Arnold. ISBN 0-340-51768-9.

This is the second in a series devoted to neurology, the first concerned epilepsy. 100 Maxims is a good idea and not a gimmick

to reshuffle other books on Parkinson's disease. It is far from a “scissors and paste” job. Three authors have written about the 100 most important facts concerning the diagnosis, treatment, cause and associated features of Parkinson's disease. It has led to pithy statements which are accessible and easily read. Indeed this book was a pleasure to review, and one of the few neurology books I have managed to read from cover to cover.

The sections on diagnosis are especially enjoyable. Here are clinicians writing well about the subject they know and practice every day. In addition the book is up-to-date and well referenced. All aspects of PD are covered, albeit in a succinct fashion. Nevertheless not much is missed. The section on aetiology is one of the more lucid accounts of a difficult area. The clinical perspective though, holds sway with tips on how to identify other diseases resembling PD, and practical steps, which are not always pharmacological to help patients. This book offers a pragmatic response to the problems of PD. It is difficult to praise it too highly, so don't be put off by the title as this is the best small book on Parkinson's Disease. Every physician who comes into contact with PD could benefit from reading it.

CG CLOUGH

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## SHORT NOTICES

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**MRI of the Brain II: Non-Neoplastic Disease.** The Raven MRI Teaching File. Edited by M BRANDT-ZAWADZKI AND WM G BRADLEY, JR. (Pp 216 Illustrated; Price \$72.00). 1990. New York, Raven Press. ISBN 0 88167 696 9.

**The Cognitive Neuropsychology of Schizophrenia (Essays in Cognitive Psychology Series).** By CHRISTOPHER D FRITH. (Pp 169; Price £14.95). 1992. Hove, LEA Publishers. ISBN 0-86377-224-2.

**Tutorials in Motor Neuroscience Vol. 62 Series D: Behavioural and Social Sciences.** Edited by J REQUIN AND G E STELMACH (Pp 672; Price: Dfl335.00; US \$179.00; UK £114.00). 1991. Dordrecht, Kluwer Academic Publishers Group. ISBN 0-7923-1385-2.

**Sleep, Sleepiness and Performance. (Wiley Series in Human Performance and Cognition).** Edited by TIMOTHY H MONK (Pp 325; Price: \$89.95). 1991. New York, John Wiley & Sons Inc. ISBN 0-471-93002-4.

**Cognitive-Behavioral Assessment and Therapy with Adolescents.** By JANET M ZARB (Pp 239; Price: \$41.00). 1992. New York, Brunner/Mazel Inc. Distrib: Raven Press, New York. ISBN 0-87630-685-7.