

in Crisis, children and the elderly. The second section outlines a number of special areas of concern; Legal Issues, Domestic Violence, Child Abuse, Rape, Homelessness and the patient with mental retardation. These chapters include advice about the legal implications of these areas; extremely valuable but of limited application as it refers exclusively to US Law, but a model of what could be provided for other nationalities. The section dealing with explicitly psychiatric emergencies is a mere 80 pages long; less than a quarter of the whole book, and this is what is so refreshing. True psychiatric emergencies are relatively rare but situations in which distressed people come to casualty are common, and this book makes no bones about the value of particular expertise in being able to deal with them optimally.

The book also includes a section about medical-psychiatric emergencies and an invaluable short pharmacopoeia covering drug overdoses and dose equivalents of common psychotropic agents. Again this section betrays its country of origin but otherwise loses nothing.

My only significant criticism of this publication besides the inescapable specificity of its legal advice is its presentation. This is a reference book for the casualty department, and as such should be robustly presented so that it can survive repeated thumbing by repeated shifts of casualty officers. In its present flimsy ring-bound form a single copy would barely survive a busy Friday night, although its advice would be invaluable.

HUGH MIDDLETON

**Cerebrospinal Fluid in Neurology and Psychiatry.** Edited by H MCCONNELL and J BIANCHINE. Published by Chapman and Hall, London 1994. (Pp 322; £45.00.) ISBN 0-412-53570.

It is just over 100 years since Quinke first introduced lumbar puncture for the measurement of CSF pressure, cell count, protein and glucose, and for many physicians there has been little advance in examination of the "animal spirit". Since there are already a number of well established texts on cerebrospinal fluid, the authors' intention is to focus on the neurochemistry of CSF and on potential new diagnostic markers.

The text covers the anatomy, physiology and normal constituents of CSF, the findings in a selection of neurological and psychiatric diseases and this is followed by an exuberance of references.

Contrary to their stated intentions, the authors have striven for comprehensiveness, and appear to have paid the price in superficiality and lack of incisiveness. Benign intracranial hypertension for example is discussed in under two pages, but without a discussion of CSF pressure in the normal obese subject, which might lead to confusion. Lactate levels are mentioned in passing as being raised in Kearns Sayre syndrome but there is no mention of the more recently described mitochondrial cytopathies and fatty acid oxidative pathologies, nor of the diagnostic utility of feeding,

fasting or exercise in these conditions. Abnormalities of ammonia are not discussed.

The book's strength lies in its often theoretical discussion of the neurochemical findings in a limited range of neurodegenerative and psychiatric diseases, little of which is of practical benefit to the clinician on the wards who might therefore be advised to use one of the established texts for the management of their patients. In the search for data on the neurochemistry on neuropsychiatric and neurodegenerative diseases, this text would be a good place to start.

JON SUSSMAN

**Snoring and Sleep Apnoea—Personal and Family Guide to Diagnosis and Treatment.** Edited by RALPH A PASCUALLY MD and SALLY WARREN SOEST. Published by Raven Press, New York 1994. (Pp 254; \$24.00). ISBN 0-78170136-8.

Snoring used to be considered to be a joke but recently many snorers have become worried that they may have a potentially dangerous disorder since snoring is now known to be a symptom of obstructive sleep apnoeas and this condition is associated with an increased risk of hypertension, strokes, myocardial infarctions and premature death. This book is aimed at these snorers and their families. It is written by a Doctor who runs a Sleep Disorders Centre and a partner of a patient with sleep apnoeas. This combination has produced a comprehensive overview of snoring and sleep apnoeas which is written in an informal style. Most of the opinions are well balanced although some statements such as that 20 million people in the USA have sleep apnoeas and that two to three thousand of these die suddenly each year at night because of it are contentious.

The book has been written for an American audience but much of it is applicable to the United Kingdom except the last few chapters on funding and how to choose your Sleep Centre and Sleep Specialist. The sections on surgical treatment and nasal continuous positive airway pressure (CPAP) treatment are particularly useful. They enable the patient to feel their way through what can be a confusing subject and the authors have quite rightly put forward the advantages and disadvantages of each treatment for each of the different clinical situations without favouring any one technique overall. The book does not contain many illustrations but those that are included are clear and helpful. Many Doctors and other Health Care workers as well as snorers and those with sleep apnoeas will obtain a better understanding of these disorders and their management from reading this book.

JOHN SHNEERSON

**Alzheimer Disease.** Editors: ROBERT D TERRY, ROBERT KATZMAN, KATHERINE L BICK. Publishers: Raven Press, New York 1994. (Pp 490; \$175.50). ISBN 0-7817-0081-7.

With the shelves of libraries and booksellers alike beginning to groan under the strain of texts relating to Alzheimer's disease and other causes of dementia the arrival of a further weighty contribution might seemingly be neither warranted nor welcome. Such a view would however be premature. This volume stands out as a shining example of readability and is a fitting testimony to the past three decades of research effort in this field. It follows on from an earlier literary landmark of the editors published by Raven Press some 15 years ago. Although the 457 pages, divided into 28 chapters are produced by a multiplicity of authors, almost entirely from North America, the style is uniform and the emphasis even. The text is clearly understandable to the expert and novice alike, is informative and most importantly in this rapidly moving field, up to date. Indeed the inclusion of the year's "big story" concerning Apolipoprotein E4, by Katzman himself, is witness to this. The full gamut of disease history, clinical expression, pathology, biochemistry and molecular genetics is covered and each chapter well written and comprehensive. My one major complaint would be the almost complete lack of consideration of the role glial cells might play in either producing or promoting the disease process. Such an omission is particularly notable given the recent attention to the possible action of astrocytes and microglial cells as "inflammatory mediators" in an acute phase response and the possibility of treatment with anti-inflammatory agents. Minor quibbles would include more concern for the role of complement factors and proteoglycans in plaque formation and the ways in which prion disease and Down's syndrome might help in clarifying the process of amyloidosis and plaque formation. A further irritation is the Transatlantic habit of relegating nouns to adjectives, poor Alois Alzheimer following along a path already well beaten by Arnold Pick and John Langdon Haydon Down. Alzheimer's disease was a good enough eponym for Kraepelin in 1910; I see no need to abbreviate in 1994. Indeed the reverse might be justified, given the aetiological heterogeneity of the disorder, producing the title "Alzheimer's diseases!"

Nonetheless, it gives me pleasure to recommend this book to all interested in the field of dementia research. The price at \$175.50 is no snippet though the quality of its presentation and content should ensure a sufficiently long shelf-life.

DMA MANN

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## CORRECTION

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Leigh PN, Ray-Chaudhuri K. Motor neuron disease. *J Neurol Neurosurg Psychiatry* 1994;57: 886-96 (neurological management).

In the second paragraph of the second column, p. 890 "... median survival being about 22 years" should read "median survival being about 22 months."