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The American Neuropsychiatric Association will hold its Sixth Annual Meeting on July 21–23, 1994 in Newport, Rhode Island, USA. The meeting will be a joint session with the British Neuropsychiatry Association and the programme will include invited lectures, platform and poster presentations, and videotaped case demonstrations. The meeting theme is "Subcortical disease in neuropsychiatry". Information regarding this meeting and requests for abstract submission forms can be obtained from: Stephen Salloway, MD, Chairman, Scientific Programme Planning Committee, Department of Neurology, Butler Hospital, 345 Blackstone Blvd. Providence, Rhode Island 02906, USA. Tel. +1 401 455-6403; fax. +1 401 455-6405.

BOOK REVIEWS

Chronic Pain: Reflex Sympathetic Dystrophy: Prevention and Management. By HOOSHANG HOOSHMAND. (Pp 202 Illustrated; Price: £76.00). 1993. Florida, CRC Press Inc. UK Distrib: London, Mosby-Year Book Europe Ltd. ISBN 0-8493-8667-5.

"Chronic pain is being mismanaged universally. Impatient surgeons try unsuccessfully to excise pain, internists load the patient with narcotics and depressing tranquillisers. Chiropractors try to cure everything with their fingers. Acupuncturists shoot darts at the patients". So begins the introduction to this 168 page book. Disciplines from dermatology to psychiatry are attacked for branding patients with inappropriate and unhelpful labels, and prescribing treatment that often worsens their condition. This theme continues throughout.

The initial chapters cover the history and anatomy of RSD and the crucial involvement of the sympathetic nervous system (SNS). The diffuse anatomical nature of the SNS and bilateral representation explains the failure of surgical techniques. Stress, eustress, the limbic system, disuse and ephatic (scar) pain and their role in the development of RSD are described. Aetiology, diagnosis, prevention and management of RSD complete this volume. Thermography is promoted as an essential tool in early diagnosis. Referred pain, trigger points and electrical injuries are well covered.

Diagnosing RSD in the early stages is often difficult. Investigated appropriately with thermography, followed by vigorous treatment with physiotherapy, sympathetic nerve blockade and antidepressants, rather than narcotic analgesics, will produce good results. Late stages of RSD are easy to diagnose and very difficult to treat. Dietary counselling (avoidance of stimulants and alcohol) is stressed and patients urged to

adopt a different lifestyle. Much of this is reasonable advice, although the emphasis on, and illustrations for, thermography were not always convincing. Frequent repetition of favourite themes irritated rather than enlightened. There are many typographical errors, and the writing style hinders clarity. A thorough revision would considerably improve this work without detracting from the content and provide a useful addition to this fascinating field.

R D E BATTERSBY

Multiple Sclerosis: Its Impact from Childhood to Old Age. (Major Problems in Neurology Series 126). By HELMUT J BAUER and FOLKER A HANEFELD. (Pp 177; Price: £30.00). 1993. London, WB Saunders Co. Ltd. ISBN 0-7020-1606-3.

It is not surprising that something of a research industry has developed on the back of epidemiology in multiple sclerosis. Surveys are easy to carry out, if somewhat laborious, and they generate concepts through the use of large numbers, thus satisfying both the intellectually curious and the statistically cognate. Over the last decade, population based surveys of patients with multiple sclerosis, involving many thousands of cases, have defined the natural history of the disease and show surprising consistency of results despite marked variations in methodology. *Multiple Sclerosis: Its Impact from Childhood to Old Age* summarises the clinical experience of 660 patients with multiple sclerosis from Gottingen studied over the last 15 years. The clinical features in this cohort are considered on the basis of age with a further emphasis on practical aspects of the disease, its treatment and management.

Others have described more cases, but Professors Bauer and Hanefeld establish beyond doubt, that multiple sclerosis can manifest in childhood and the diagnostic pitfalls and presentations in this age group are well described. The clinical features in young adults from Gottingen provide a comprehensive survey of symptoms and signs, each analysed in sub-groups defined by age, duration of the disease and disability, and with many useful tables; but the authors do not make clear that these frequency data are not point prevalence morbidity statistics or lifetime risks for individual manifestations of multiple sclerosis observed in their population based cohort. In older age, the practical issues are disability and the causes of death in individuals with multiple sclerosis; here, Professors Bauer and Hanefeld discuss in detail the often neglected issue of suicide in multiple sclerosis.

The book concludes with a critique of management which contains useful guidance on what is offered by state and charitable institutions in different countries. Throughout, the approach is practical and—despite the epidemiological substrate for this monograph—retains an emphasis on the individual with multiple sclerosis as person and not as statistic.

As the latest issue in the Saunders *Major Problems in Neurology* series, individuals will do well to buy this volume and keep their collection intact.

ALASTAIR COMPSTON

Gamma Knife Surgery: A Guide for Referring Physicians. By JEREMY C GANZ. (Pp 163 Illustrated; Price: DM69, US\$45, Softcover). 1993. Wien, Springer-Verlag. ISBN 3-211-82476-6.

Jeremy Ganz has written an excellent introduction to the field of Stereotactic Radiosurgery. It comes in the guise, as its title suggests, of a guide to physicians thinking of referring patients to a unit with a Gamma Knife, the method of radiosurgery which was launched by Professor Lars Leksell in Stockholm in 1968. The layout is logical, clearly set out and the style lucid, if at times somewhat pedantic. What emerges is a useful description of the method, the radiological principles behind it and an outline of the conditions for which it has been used, the doses used, the results obtained and some of the difficulties and side effects encountered. It provides a good summary of the basic information which would be useful to a newcomer to any form of radiosurgery whatever the system of stereotactically directed beams of ionising radiation to be used.

DAVID FORSTER

Epileptogenic and Excitotoxic Mechanisms (Current Problems in Epilepsy Series No. 8). By G AVANZINI, R FARIELLO, U HEINEMANN and R MUTANI. (Pp 158; Price: £32.00, US\$64.00 H/bk). 1993. London, John Libbey & Co. Ltd. ISBN 0-86196-386-5.

This volume represents the proceedings of an advanced course on epileptology held in Sicily in January, 1992. It is mainly intended for people with a special research or clinical interest in epilepsy, and it focuses on the underlying mechanism of epileptogenesis, especially in the developing brain. It is a slim volume with 14 brief chapters, approximately half of which are from Italian laboratories, and the other half from leading laboratories in North America and Europe. The format and scope of the chapters vary: some give a general overview of their assigned topic (with useful up-to-date citations on the whole), while others present more detailed recent findings in an article format.

The topic of epileptogenesis is approached mainly from two angles: 1. a conventional cellular, electrophysical approach, and 2. a developmental approach. Attempts are made to correlate the developmental profile of different types of seizure manifestations in the neonate with the maturation of inhibitory and excitatory transmitter systems and neuronal connectivity, thereby providing insights into the mechanism of initiation and propagation of seizure activity.

In addition, the process of amygdala kindling in adult and neonatal rats is the topic of two chapters. Other chapters that discuss general animal models of epilepsy or mechanism of action of antiepileptic drugs, appear to be more tangential to the central theme of epileptogenesis.

David Prince provides an excellent, succinct summary on the membrane properties that account for the progression of epileptogenic events. Uwe Heinemann and co-workers successfully combine an electrophysiological and a developmental approach

by studying extracellular potassium homeostasis during stimulation in hippocampal slices from rats at different stages of post-natal development.

There is still much unanswered about the mechanism of epileptogenesis, and about the relationship between epileptogenesis, seizure-expression, and excitotoxicity, but this volume provides an interesting up-date on some of the more central questions that need to be asked.

ASTRID G CHAPMAN

Practical Psychiatry: Common Sense, Compassion, and the Medical Model. By RICHARD W HUDGENS. (Pp 208; Price: \$43.75). 1993. Illinois, Charles C Thomas. ISBN 0-398-05857-1.

The title of this book does not prepare you for the contents. It is quite unique. This is not a textbook of psychiatry. It assumes the reader has a good factual grounding in psychiatry. The book is an attempt to put on paper the accumulated wisdom of thirty years practice in clinical psychiatry. Here you find the helpful hints, practical tips and rules of thumb that a craftsman might try to impart to his apprentice.

It is impossible in a short review to give an idea of the wide range of topics covered. Where else could you find advice on whether you should attend the funeral of a patient? Here you will find help in handling personal questions from patients; you can learn how to deal with referral agents who fail to tell the patient that you are a psychiatrist.

The advice given is sound, rooted in common sense and compassion. It is unashamedly "medical" in philosophy and unflinchingly sees the psychiatrist as the leader of the therapeutic chamber orchestra.

I enjoyed reading this book. The author's stance is very much akin to my own and it is pleasant to have ones prejudices reinforced. I would not send trainees out to buy it but if a copy is available it will do them no harm and could do them good. Unfortunately, I do not think one can learn this kind of wisdom easily from a book. That needs time, experience and practice.

C TONKS

Mechanism and Management of Headache/5th Edition. By JAMES W LANCE. (Pp 289; Price: £37.50). 1993. Oxford, Butterworth-Heinemann. ISBN 0-7506-0575-8.

Thousands of published papers and hundreds of symposia devoted to headache have materialised since the Lance's first edition in 1969. Approaches to the many unsolved dilemmas have followed the directions of other neuroscience research, leaning on neurotransmitter chemistry, receptor pharmacology, vascular and other imaging techniques. But since these have failed to yield adequate explanations of "how and why the head aches", and since countless

trials have secured the most modest of improvements for the headache sufferer, we now see the intrusions of fringe medicine and its polygenic practitioners entering the arena with herbal cures, biofeedback, acupuncture, and, elimination diets. The student of migraine history will find none of this new, nor a matter for surprise; but it is of interest that in a successful attempt to be comprehensive, if perhaps too open minded, James Lance pays more than lip service to these issues e.g., providing two curious appendixes on relaxation exercises and, hyperventilation.

The main theme and Lance's eclectic approach remain similar to earlier editions. In an excellent and thoroughly revised text, he has arrayed the many headaches to conform with the International Headache Society classification. There are many new items, including an up-to-date appraisal of sumatriptan, to maintain our interest; though one occasionally feels let down when he refrains from providing his own opinions on controversial topics such as the rival merits of ergotamine and dihydro-ergotamine, or the basis of post-traumatic headaches. The text is well written and well illustrated; references are adequate rather than cumbersome, though the selection won't flatter all contributors to the vast headache literature.

Thoroughness, practicality, and a widely based scholarly view of a huge subject are the hallmarks of this splendid text and explain its continuing supremacy in a well stacked competitive market.

JMS PEARCE

Occipital Seizures and Epilepsies in Children—Mariani Foundation Paediatric Neurology Series 1. Edited by F ANDERMANN, A BEAUMANOIR, L MIRA, J ROGER and C A TASSINARI. (Pp 246 Illustrated; Price: £40.00). 1993. London, John Libbey & Co. Ltd. ISBN 0-86196-385-7.

As a source of seizures, the occipital lobes have been somewhat ignored. A colloquium, held in 1992, provided the basis for this publication which covers aspects of anatomical and biochemical development of the infant brain, and maturation of neurophysiological parameters as well as seizures and epilepsies originating in the occipital regions.

There are four main areas covered in the chapters specifically relating to seizures. The possible relationship of migraine, particularly basilar migraine, to occipital epilepsy is examined in depth. Arguments given in one chapter, suggesting that there is a migraine-epilepsy syndrome, are countered by EEG evidence to the contrary in another contribution. Clearly there is scope for further study in this area. As would be anticipated, benign occipital epilepsies are reported in some detail. The splitters are in the ascendant! Benign childhood epilepsy with occipital paroxysms can now be further divided into early and late onset variants; or may present with prolonged seizures and automatisms. A high incidence of cerebrovascular pathology is reported in the chapter on symptomatic occipital epilepsy.

The relationship between photosensitivity and seizures originating in the occipital region is discussed with evidence given that not all TV induced seizures are primary generalised.

On the whole the text is succinct and well referenced; but, at times, the English is a little quaint, reflecting the predominantly Italian authorship. In addition, the editors could, with advantage, have pruned repetitious descriptions of seizures and other aspects of occipital epilepsies. Those writing on basic science aspects did not always successfully discuss the implications for occipital epilepsies. I found much of interest in this book, but I doubt that it will have a wide appeal. Perhaps its most important message is that occipital epilepsy is an interesting condition that needs a great deal of further study.

SJ WALLACE

Advances and Technical Standards in Neurosurgery/Vol. 20. Edited by L SYMON, L CALLIAUW, F COHADON, J LOBO ANTUNES, F LOEW, H NORNES, E PASZTOR, JD PICKARD, AJ STRONG and M G YASARGIL. (Pp 308 Illustrated; Price: DM240.-, US\$160.00). 1993. Wien, New York, Springer-Verlag. ISBN 3-211-82383-2. ISBN 0-387-82383-2.

This volume of *Advances and Technical Standards* should be bought by many, as it contains Bernard Williams' longest article to date on syringomyelia and related hind-brain syndromes. As he is a world authority on this controversial subject, it deserves a monograph or even a whole book by him, so any text of length deserves attention. His experimental work confirming Gardiner's principles if not the original ideas of aetiology, (which he classifies as "suck, slosh and slump"—descriptions as colourful as their author), as well as his classification of hind brain syndromes, are of enormous importance and are set out in this chapter. His unswerving attachment to foramen manum decompression without dural grafting and his neurological recovery rates are described, but he fails to comment on results of other authors' procedures of primary syrinx shunting, although he correctly decries it for its dangers. In short, wonderful but flawed.

Of the remainder, this volume is the proverbial curate's egg. In the *Advances* section, Professor Harding's excellent chapter on neurogenetics should worry any surgeon who has removed a cerebellar haemangioblastoma without screening the rest of the body for Von Hippel Lindau features. This chapter is followed later in the *Standards* section with one on the surgery of the condition and related disorders. Although a reasoned approach, it is not a problem that many would find particularly challenging and most would expect good results. Much more use will be the chapter in "Advances" on the state of the art of flow measurement using ultrasound and its clinical application, as will be the "Standards" chapter on Medulloblastomas, which stresses the long term problems despite the ability to achieve a technical cure from the malignancy.

MICHAEL POWELL