outlet syndrome and birth injuries. The last three chapters deal respectively with reconstructions of nerves, diabetic neuropathy, and tumours involving nerve. In the first Appendix the clinical evidence is summarised; in the second, additional methods for testing muscle power are described. The last contains the lecture written by Sydney Sunderland and read after his death before the Sunderland Society of Seattle.

The book is illustrated throughout with numerous figures, including 215 pages of colour prints, which are both admirable and clear; equally instructive are the numerous drawings by Eugene New, the modern Leonardo of medical illustration. The figures are informative, bearing all the signs of its origin from authors with immense practical experience, thoroughly familiar with all aspects of their subject.

Of particular interest to aficionados of brachial plexus surgery is the use in 18 cases of the posterolateral approach to the plexus, facilitating exposure of the most proximal part of the root and avoiding an approach through a region scarred by injury or by previous operation. The particular advantages of this approach in gunshot wounds of the plexus, in which Dr Kline has unrivalled experience, is stressed. As the sub-title implies, the book is concerned with the gross and microscopic pathology of lesions, clinical features, operative findings, techniques and results. Some of the ideas and methods are familiar; some are new; all are well tried. It is a heroic achievement to have done all this work and to have analysed and presented it in a form so well ordered and readable. All those working in this field should have this book as a constant companion; all those working in adjacent fields should know where to lay hands on a copy.

As a matter of form it is necessary to make some criticisms. A rather wearying criticism is that both authors are well known as speculative as well as operative masons and thus consideration of the mechanisms of sensibility and of pain, of the role of the muscle spindles and of the pathology of the outlet syndrome is perhaps a little thin, not might have been better to give “intrascopic” lesions a separate chapter than to distribute them in the various sections, but they are all there anyway. Some may have hoped for a more vigorous approach to injection injuries, but the possibility of such an approach is at any rate adumbrated. None of these trifling criticisms detracts in any way from the value of a great piece of work from the debt of gratitude owed to the authors and their associates by peripheral neurologists and neurosurgeons all over the world.

GEORGE BONNEY


At first glance Sensory Neuropathies might appear a tad arcane, a clinical topic not commonly troubling the jobbing neurologist. And a “Book of the Meeting” format, papers ranging from Morphometry in greater auricular nerve to including “Peripheral oxycane causes peripheral distal axonopathy in rats, costing US $79-00 and taking five years to produce (the meeting was held in 1990) offer small comfort to the second glance.

Scratch the surface and find a gem. Well . . . there are good things in the book. Sensory neuropathies are not so rare—certainly, diabetic, trauma, collagen vascular disorders and hereditary syndromes are the commonest explanations, and there are excellent reviews of acquired sensory neuropathies (Mitumoto and Wilbourn, in press). Asbury, Griffin and Cornblath, drug induced neuropathies (Sluga et al), and inflammatory sensory neuropathies (Hughes). But the inconsistent citation—seemingly as much as some as conventional scientific papers (Methods, Patients, Results, etc), makes for an uncomfortable read. The referencing is also inconsistent, some listing serially others alphabetically, and descriptive, bearing all the signs of its origin from authors with immense practical experience, thoroughly familiar with all aspects of their subject.

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GEORGE BONNEY


This short volume of 352 pages is the second part of volume 1, being preceded by The Genetics of Psychiatric Disorders. Taken together, these two volumes cover the contribution of epidemiological method to gene, environment and gene-environment effects on the expression of mental disorders throughout the lifespan, the effects of which will increase enormously over the next decade.

This volume sets the current scene with contributions from the international academic community and covers adolescence and adulthood, including late life.

Brian Cooper's review of epidemiology and of cognitive decline is wide ranging and excellent. The second chapter provides a useful introduction to the area of psychiatric disease and physical illness—the domain of the increasingly recognised specialism of liaison psychiatry. The section on epidemiological evidence for the association of physical disease and psychiatric disorder is short and would have benefited from a table systematically reviewing methodology. The discussion on sample bias and whether association indicates causation is thorough and useful and Berkson's bias, which is the likelihood of psychiatric disorder being identified simply because individuals are already under scrutiny by the health service is under discussed. The prevalence of psychiatric disorders in physical illness for health resource allocation was interesting but we really need to see trials prove that such intervention would improve outcome.

In the chapter on post-traumatic stress disorder a large number of prevalence studies are described. Some of these studies quoted are clearly fascinating, such as those which, because they are population based, could examine genuinely unselected veterans and identify early factors which predicted combat exposure. More discussion of the biases which might arise when conducting this kind of study would have been welcome.

One primary care is the focus of the fourth chapter, including all the familiar filters into health care, whilst indicating that this does not necessarily apply in all health provision settings. The emphasis is laid on the importance of improving diagnosis and increasing use in primary care and the benign prognosis of most of these disorders. This seems to be a paradoxical message, which at a time when community care of the more severe end of the spectrum is under scrutiny, is puzzling.

The chapter on affective disorder provides a thorough overview of the themes in epidemiological affective disorders, for those not familiar with this area, cohort effects being the most particularly important. This chapter is the only one which mentions attributable risk—an important epidemiological concept in relation to the size of risk effects in populations. Schizophrenia is thoroughly described with careful consideration of potential biases in comparative and time trend studies. Risk factors are reviewed including a note of whether the studies are based on prevalence or incidence data. The authors have attempted to provide a rough odds ratio from the range of selected studies whilst not giving a meta-analysis estimate. I found the resulting number difficult to interpret, it had no numerical weight but the contribution on eating disorders left me thinking that a greater understanding of attitudes to eating disorders might come from an anthropological approach to inform future epidemiological work. The gender chapter launches many fascinating areas, particularly attitudes to female and male attributes and the changing role of men and women in modern society. It is a pity the sections on personality disorder, substance abuse, and childhood disorders, all of which have a substantial epidemiological literature.

In all this is a book packed with information which would be useful to dip into, use as a quick reference and if time is available read with pleasure for the ideas it throws up for the future. It has been written by clinicians with an interest in epidemiology and, as mentioned above, readers should not look to this volume for an authoritative account covering all aspects of epidemiological method for each disorder. I recommend it to any individual with an interest in the topics included, not just those with an interest in epidemiology.

CAROL BRAYNE


This is one of a series of books sponsored by the International Academy for Biomedical and Drug Research, based on international scientific meetings. This volume followed a