

Books

Inside the Brain. Revolutionary Discoveries of How the Mind Works

By Ronald Kotulak. Pp. xiii + 194. R144.95. Kansas City: Andrews and McMeel. 1996. (Distributed by Macdonald Purnell (Pty) Ltd, Denver Ext.). ISBN 0-8362-1043-3.

A delightful, beautiful and masterly review of the current status of scientific brain research, invaluable to both the lay man and scientist. The book is full of interesting facts and anecdotes. More than 300 brain researchers were consulted. The plasticity and dynamic nature of the brain reacting and changing to external and internal stimuli are continually highlighted. The brain has the undoubted capacity to change and develop its conceptual frameworks, habits and behaviour. Real world problems of crime, poverty, single parenting and lifestyle diseases such as alcoholism are linked to scientific concepts and therapeutic strategies. Crime is dedemonised and education with its preventative and treatment influences is given its rightful place. The book emphasizes the importance of self reflection and self control in individual development. This is a classic and is indispensable reading for all people and especially for those involved in the health sciences.

C H van der Meyden

Pain in the Elderly. Task Force on Pain in the Elderly*

Edited by Betty R Ferrell and Bruce A Ferrel. Pp. xiii + 137. £25. Seattle: IASP Press. 1996. ISBN 0-931092-15-9.

'Nowhere else in medicine is the preservation of *quality of life* (my italics) as high a priority as it is in geriatrics' (Stein, chapter 6 of this book). This applies especially to pain in the elderly.

The geriatric population is increasingly rapidly. For example, 1 in 5 individuals in the UK is over the age of 60. The advancing age brings with it increasing problems of malignancy, strokes, heart disease, arthritis and various pain syndromes. Thus it becomes imperative that every physician, irrespective of his/her discipline, acquires some competence in managing the geriatric population. With respect to pain, definite diagnosis is often not possible and where a diagnosis is made the problem may be incurable. The difficulties are

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compounded by the fact that there are very few good studies of pain management in those over 75 years of age. This age group is often excluded from clinical trials.

Against the above background *Pain in the Elderly* is a report of the Task Force on Pain in the Elderly of the International Association for the Study of Pain. The contributors (25 in all) to the book are largely drawn from the USA with 4 contributors each from Canada and Australia, one each from Brazil, Thailand, Japan and Denmark. The 'other side of the Atlantic' is largely not represented. The layout is good and the style is consistent throughout the book. All major areas of pain in the elderly are covered. These include cancer related pain and postoperative pain management. Of greater value to the average practitioner are the chapters on management of chronic non-malignant pain syndromes, and pharmacology. Drug-drug and drug-disease interactions are correctly emphasised as most of the elderly have more than one disease requiring concomitant medication. The dangers of the non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs are ever present and need to be consistently reiterated. However, the section on the adjuvant analgesics is disappointingly brief and unhelpful. This group of agents which includes drugs such as amitriptyline and carbamazepine are widely used in chronic pain syndromes, particularly in neurological practice (admittedly, my bias). Yet their indications, abuse and side-effects are not clearly presented. In fairness, the limited discussion probably reflects the lack of controlled trials studying these agents.

Patient education, non-drug measures and a multidisciplinary approach are important aspects of pain management. These issues are adequately and usefully addressed in the book. Whilst important, detailed pain questionnaires are probably of limited value in the old patient who is usually burdened with multiple diseases and often cognitively impaired. Non-drug measures should be encouraged, whenever possible, but I wish I could share the enthusiasm and confidence that the proponents of these methods exhibit.

Overall, *Pain in the Elderly* is a useful addition in the attack against pain. It should appeal to a wide physician audience including geriatricians, neurologists, neurosurgeons, orthopaedic surgeons, rheumatologists, oncologists and pain clinic staff. The book is fairly priced.

A I Bhigjee

TB/HIV. A Clinical Manual*

By Anthony D Harries and Dermot Maher. Pp. 135. SwFr12/US\$10.80. Geneva: WHO. 1996.

This outstanding pocket-sized manual is pitched at TB control programme officials as well as health care workers at clinics or hospitals responsible for the diagnosis or treatment of tuberculosis in the HIV era. It is simply written so that it should easily be understood by people whose first language is not English. The authors, Anthony Harries and Dermot Maher, have extensive field experience in Malawi, and Harries in particular has made significant contributions to the control of tuberculosis in resource-poor settings with a high HIV prevalence.

The manual is very well set out and indexed. The

two diseases and their interactions are described in a practical and logical manner. A major strength is that treatment and diagnostic options for different resource settings are given. The section on the management of common HIV-related disorders, which frequently occur in TB/HIV patients, is excellent. Controversial areas, such as the role of isoniazid preventative therapy in HIV infection, are presented in a balanced manner. The authors do not stress the importance of primary prophylaxis for patients with laboratory or clinical evidence of immune suppression. Low-dose cotrimoxazole prevents not only *Pneumocystis carinii* pneumonia, which is uncommon in Africa, but also toxoplasmosis, bacteraemia and bacterial pneumonia, all of which commonly occur in Africa. Another criticism is the poor print quality – in several places the print on both sides of the page came through. At just under R50, this book is a bargain – perhaps the State should consider supplying it? Highly recommended.

Gary Maartens

Tropical Pathology

Edited by Wilhelm Doerr and Gerhard Seifert. Pp. xiv + 1379. Illustrated. Heidelberg: Springer-Verlag. 1995. ISBN 3-540-57673-8.

The scope of the book is considerably more extensive than the title suggests. The number of diseases that can be considered to be truly tropical are very limited and their distribution is often determined by the distribution of a vector species that can only survive in tropical climates. This book provides comprehensive coverage of the diseases and conditions that occur more frequently in the warmer regions of the world. Although emphasis is placed on pathology, aspects such as historical background, transmission of infection, epidemiology, preventative measures and treatment are given adequate coverage. The book therefore is an invaluable reference for clinicians, laboratory personnel, students of tropical medicine as well as pathologists. There are plenty of high quality photographs to support the text and the clear style of the parasite life-cycles are most welcome. Of the 29 authorities responsible for writing the chapters, most do not originate from developed countries and more than one third are South African, which is welcome in a book of this type as their environment ensures that they are in constant personal contact with the subject matter. Special emphasis has been given to HIV/AIDS by ensuring that it is dealt with in all the sections of the book where relevant. A whole chapter has been devoted to the increasingly important field of Geomedicine. An up to date chapter on 'New technology for the diagnosis of infectious disease' is to be welcomed; this was further supported in some of the chapters where examples of specific utilisation of this technology was discussed. Although treatment was concisely discussed in most cases, it was largely omitted in the section on Protozoal Diseases (except for Malaria). In conclusion this is a well laid out, very readable, authoritative book.

T F H G Jackson

Eyelid Myclonia with Absences

Edited by John S Duncan and C P Panayiotoulos.
Pp. vii + 122. Illustrated. £10/US\$33. London: John Libbey.
1996. ISBN 086-196-5361.

This 120 page, small, hard cover book is a review of a very unusual subject. Syndromes falling within the framework of idiopathic generalised epilepsy range from classical absences (previously called petit mal) to the very unusual eyelid myoclonia with absences. This book reports the papers presented at a symposium in 1995 held at the Royal Society of Medicine in London and addresses only the topic of 'Eyelid Myoclonia with Absences' (EMA) in detail.

The chapters range from a review of the anatomy and physiology of the eyelids, including an historical account of the syndrome, and discuss the symptoms and syndrome of EMA in both children and adults. As there is thought to be a genetic predisposition to this syndrome and also that it can be self induced by eyelid flickering and other mechanisms, these unusual aspects are discussed in detail.

This is not a book for students or primary care health workers. However both paediatricians and neurologists throughout the world are intrigued by this unusual distinct syndrome characterised by the triad of eyelid myoclonia associated with brief absences and generalised discharges of 36 Hz polyspikes and slow waves which are brief (usually only 3 - 4 seconds and can be precipitated by eye closure and photo sensitivity.

Jeavons is credited with first describing this syndrome in 1977 and it is proposed in this book that EMA should be called Jeavons Syndrome.

However even Jeavons attributes the first description of this condition to Professor Francis Ames, Professor of Neurology at Cape Town University and Groote Schuur Hospital who first described the syndrome in the journal *Brain* in 1971.

Therapeutic suggestions include replacing the standard Ethosuximide with Lamotrigine or possibly even Topiramate - newer anti-epileptic agents.

For the very specialised audience of neurophysiologists, neurologists and paediatricians with an interest in epilepsy, this slim monograph will be a very welcome, well written and extremely authoritative reference on EMA. At £18 it is expensive only because of the current rate of exchange.

V Fritz

Organ Transplantation

Edited by P Hervé *et al.* Pp. xx + 1436. Illustrated.
£200/US\$366. 1996. London: John Libbey & Co Ltd.
ISBN 0-86196-383-0.

Recent advances in organ transplantation have had a major impact on virtually every discipline in clinical medicine as well as in the basic sciences. This has created two problems. Firstly, it has become difficult for the transplant specialist to keep abreast of all developments in transplantation, and secondly, with the increase in numbers of patients undergoing transplantation, it becomes increasingly likely that a non-transplant specialist will encounter a transplant recipient in his or her practice. This

book on transplantation goes a long way to resolving both problems.

This definitive work on transplantation covers virtually every aspect of the speciality. The first few chapters are devoted to a selection of topics essential to the understanding of the biological mechanisms and clinical events involved in organ transplantation. The section on immunology and immunosuppression is up-to-date, clearly presented and well illustrated. There is a comprehensive section on the complications of organ transplantation. The major part of the book analyses specific aspects of each type of organ transplant, viz., renal, liver, heart, lung, pancreas and intestinal transplantation. Again, the information is up-to-date and with sufficient detail to be of reference value. Bone marrow transplantation and corneal transplantation are also included. A separate section is devoted to the problems of xenotransplantation and the last few chapters deal with the socio-economic and ethical issues in transplantation.

The chapters are presented by renowned specialists, mainly from France, but with many contributions from other parts of the world. The information is up-to-date, clearly presented and in sufficient detail to be useful to specialists in transplantation. Each chapter is followed by useful references.

The only minor criticism is the size of the book. With 1 400 pages, it is very bulky and increasing the page-size would certainly have made it less cumbersome.

Thus, this definitive work on organ transplantation would be extremely useful both to specialists in the field, and as a reference book to non-transplant specialists who increasingly encounter transplant patients in their practice.

D Kahn

Books received

The receipt of these books is acknowledged, and this listing must be regarded as sufficient return for the courtesy of the sender. Books that appear to be of particular interest will be reviewed as space permits. The *SAMJ* does not publish unsolicited reviews.

Neurological Investigations.* Edited by R A C Hughes. Pp. x + 511. Illustrated. £51. 1997. London: BMJ. ISBN 0-7279-1080-9.

Management of Injuries in Children.* By John F T Glasgow and H Kerr Graham. Pp. x + 423. Illustrated. £38. 1997. London: BMJ. ISBN 0-7279-0925-8.

Advanced Paediatric Life Support. The Practical Approach.* Second edition. Advanced Life Support Group. Pp. 306. Illustrated. £25. 1997. London: BMJ. ISBN 0-7279-1069-8.

Epidemiology. A Manual for South Africa.* Edited by J M Katzenellenbogen, G Joubert and S S Abdool Karim. Pp. 295. R120. 1997. Cape Town: Oxford University Press. ISBN 0-19-571308-7.

Textbook of Diabetes.* (2 volumes). Second edition. Edited by John C Pickup and Gareth Williams. Illustrated. £195. 1997. Oxford: Blackwell Science. ISBN Volume 1 0-86542-746-1, Volume 2 0-86542-747-X, the set 0-632-03802-0.

How to Survive in Anaesthesia.* By P Neville Robinson and George M Hall. Pp. xi + 172. £22. 1997. London: BMJ. ISBN 0-7278-1066-3.

On the Shoulders of Giants. Eponyms and Names in Obstetrics and Gynaecology. By Thomas F Baskett. Pp. xvi + 270. Illustrated. 1996. London: RCOG Press. ISBN 0-902331-94-9.

Intensive Care Manual.* Fourth edition. Edited by T E Oh. Pp. xii + 1011. R399. 1997. Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann. ISBN 0-7506-2358-6.