

Book Reviews

MIGRAINE — CLINICAL AND RESEARCH ASPECTS. Edited by J.N. Blau 1987. Published by The Johns Hopkins University Press. 679 pages. \$19.50

Headache is the most common problem seen by neurologists and the majority of patients referred with headache are diagnosed as migraine. Estimates of the prevalence of migraine range up to 30% of the total population, underlining its importance in general medicine as well.

This new volume, by an international group of migraine experts provides a balanced and comprehensive approach to contemporary thinking about the pathophysiology, clinical aspects and management of migraine and cluster headache. In contrast to many such multi-authored volumes, this text is not the published proceedings of a symposium but an attempt to provide a critical and thought-provoking review of the subject from acknowledged authorities.

An interesting feature of the book is the in-depth treatment of historical aspects in two chapters on discarded therapies and discarded theories of pathogenesis as well as a chapter on ". . . the history of thought about migraine from Aretaeus to 1920." Newer investigative methods such as visual evoked potentials, cerebral blood flow studies, pupillographic/pharmacologic studies, MRI and CT imaging are adequately covered. A chapter is devoted to each of the major theories of pathogenesis including the neural hypothesis, disturbance in cranial vascular regulation, disordered amine metabolism, the platelet theory, the allergic hypothesis, and Leao's spreading depression.

Management is discussed in detail with a separate chapter on beta-adrenergic blocking agents for prophylaxis. More controversial aspects of therapy such as biofeedback and the plant Feverfew are also given individual chapters. The chapter by Dr. Blau on "A Clinicotherapeutic Approach to Migraine" could be criticised for its cursory mention of amitriptyline for migraine prophylaxis. Many neurologists would consider the tricyclic antidepressants as the first agent to try for migraine prophylaxis, even in non-depressed patients. This point is, however, made in a later chapter on "Psychological Factors in Migraine".

I was also surprised at the omission of a chapter on epilepsy and migraine in a book of this size and scope, a topic of greater clinical relevance and contemporary interest than some others which are represented.

The book is beautifully edited and produced and amply meets its goal of providing a statement of contemporary thinking in the field. I highly recommend this volume as a reference source for all neurologists as well as researchers in the area of migraine.

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INTEGRATIVE NEUROENDOCRINOLOGY: MOLECULAR, CELLULAR AND CLINICAL ASPECTS. Edited by

S.M. McCann and R.I. Weiner. Published by Karger, Switzerland. 244 pages. \$180Cdn approx.

This compilation of papers and plenary lectures given at the First International Congress of Neuroendocrinology in San Francisco in July of 1986 covers the following topics: Functional Neuroanatomy, Hypothalamic Peptides and the Control of Their Release and Degradation, Peripheral Actions of Brain Peptides, Mechanism of Action of Neuropeptides, Evolution of Brain Peptides, Clinical Neuroendocrinology. The sub-topics in each of these sections are reviewed by individuals with international reputations who work in the area discussed and whose laboratories have made important contributions to knowledge in that particular field.

Little new is presented in the volume, especially since the conference occurred almost two years ago. Rather, each author provides a personal perspective on the work in a particular area. Most of the chapters are well referenced and many conclude with an extensive bibliography.

The majority of the book deals with basic science aspects of Neuroendocrinology (five of the six sections). For the individual approaching the subject with a purely clinical interest, these discussions are likely to be rather more detailed than one would wish and yet they are probably too much of a survey to be of interest to those actually working in the field. I feel that this volume is best suited as an introduction for the graduate student or fellow, approaching the field of Neuroendocrinology for the first time, who wishes an overview of the topics discussed, presented by people with a wealth of experience in that particular field.

The book is printed on high quality paper. The 72 figures and 15 tables which accompany the text are generally complimentary and clear. Unfortunately, the price puts this volume beyond the reach of the very students and fellows for whom it seems best suited. In an ideal world, this book should be available in Health Science libraries; however, with the continued rapid expansion of knowledge in this area and their limited resources, it is uncertain that libraries can afford to invest in symposia which are, to some extent, dated even at the time of publication and have a tendency to go out of date rather rapidly thereafter.

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FOCAL PERIPHERAL NEUROPATHIES. By John D. Stewart. Published by Elsevier Science Publishing Company. 421 pages. \$65Cdn approx.

This clearly written book is a welcome addition to the library of all clinical neurologists, particularly those working with peripheral disorders. The book is easily readable. It is written with a clarity of style often lacking in specialized scientific pub-