

Book Reviews

THE PRELUDE TO THE MIGRAINE ATTACK. Edited by Willem K. Amery and Albert Wauquier. Published by Holt-Saunders Ltd. Publishers. 213 pages.

Traditionally migraine is considered as an episodic condition the major feature of which is severe headache. It may well be that we have been too restricted by this viewpoint and that there is much more to migraine than just headache. Hitherto, the vast majority of studies on migraine have been on the mechanisms of pain but these studies have given little insight into the pathogenesis of migraine. It may be more productive to shift our focus to the beginning of the migraine attack. But when does the attack really begin? Does it begin with the aura or is there an even earlier phase, a prelude to the major opus which follows?

The Prelude to the Migraine Attack is the report of the proceedings of an international symposium held in September 1985 sponsored by the Belgian Migraine Society and the Janssen Research Foundation. The twenty chapters cover various events which occur in the period before the actual onset of headache, including trigger factors, premonitory phenomena and the migraine aura. Professor Blau from London who has been responsible for refocusing our attention on the preliminary events, gives a catalogue of these events from his vast experience on the subject, which is followed by a detailed review from an historic and modern perspective by Dr. Isler from Zurich. These early phenomena were of interest to our predecessors and most have been well described by the Ancients and by those in the last century such as Liveing and Gowers.

Trigger factors are discussed by Drs. Dalessio, Debney and Oleson. It is clear that there is a great deal of idiosyncrasy in trigger factors and many substances reputed to be noxious may produce headache but do not precipitate true migraine. While the significance of trigger factors may be debated there may well be something that can be done to avert a migraine attack if instituted early enough. Amery and Waelkens from the host country discuss at least one method that may have clinical application. Domperidone, a peripheral dopamine blocker, if given during the prelude phase may prevent two thirds of migraine attacks. It seems ineffective if given at the time of the aura and hence recognizing even earlier symptoms may be worthwhile. Lord from Australia, Diamond from the U.S.A., and Rose from Britain describe the various auras which present a fascinating panorama of neurological, psychic and visceral experience. They confine the aura to anything which occurs within 30 minutes of the headache onset. Currently medications are advised at the time of the aura but this may already be too late.

No current headache symposium would be complete without discussions on "spreading depression" and the controversy over neurogenic vs. vasogenic aspects of migraine. These are well covered in this volume. Antiserotonin drugs, the mainstay of prophylactic therapy have been used for their vascular effect. New antiserotonin drugs which act on nociceptive nerve terminals may prove equally effective. Whatever the mechanism may be the main message carried in this book is that early events are of paramount importance both as the subject for

research and as the signal for the institution of therapy if it is to be effective.

The report of this symposium is a refreshing new look at migraine which provides horizons toward which we should direct our efforts in combatting migraine. The Prelude to the Migraine Attack is well written and, although suffering from the repetition and redundancies seemingly impossible to avoid in reports of symposia, is eminently readable. The epilogue by Dr. Edmeads from Canada in his delightful prose is not only a resume of the proceedings of the conference, but summarizes our current state of knowledge of migraine and raises questions which suggest new areas for research. Overall, this small volume should titlate the palate of physicians interested in migraine and having read *The Prelude to the Migraine Attack*, I for one, resolve not to miss the next symposium on this exciting new area of headache research.

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SPEECH AND LANGUAGE EVALUATION IN NEUROLOGY: ADULT DISORDERS. Edited by John K. Darby. Published by Grune & Stratton Inc., 462 pages. \$101 Cdn.

This edited volume has sections that deal with asphasia, dysarthria and another one with "diffuse and hemispheric disorders", and a single chapter in the computer applications of treatment. There is also an introductory section that contains a chapter on the epidemiology of neurological diseases producing communication disorders. The introduction is reasonably comprehensive with definitions of some of the terms, except curiously the definition of aphasia is lacking. There are some interesting bits of information in the epidemiology section but some inaccuracies, such as "M.S. is a leading cause of disability in middle aged adults" without defining what middle age is. There is some overlap between the chapters, especially in the aphasia section which is not a disadvantage because several of these topics are looked at from various perspectives. A microgenetic approach to language is intriguing and somewhat different from the usually connectionistic concepts of language organization. There are comprehensive chapters on the vascular aphasias with emphasis on recovery, brain imaging, especially PET studies and neuropsychological assessment of aphasia attempting to match lesions to deficits mathematically. The "diffuse section" has one chapter summarizing such widely divergent topics, such as pragmatics, structure-function correlations, hemispheric differences, subcortical lesions, animal communication, psycholinguistic paradigms, and functional laterality tests in normals. Another chapter is on nonverbal communication after brain damage. The only chapter that deals with "diffuse" damage is the one on head injury. There is an excellent classification of the dysarthrias and a description of the examination of motor deficits of speech. Another chapter describes the treatment in a general fashion. The third chapter on the assessment of dysarthric speech again summarizes the standard dysarthria examinations. Measurement procedures are described in detail using spectrograms. Computerized treatment programs for reading comprehension, spelling, and auditory comprehension are described in