



Book Reviews

Charcot. Constructing Neurology

Edited by Goetz

Pub. Oxford University Press, England 1995. 392 pp. £40. ISBN 5076435.

This book refers not only to the medical career of this great neurologist (1825–1893) of great medical authority but to the social environment of Paris at the middle and the end of the XIXth century. Doctors and scientists as a whole tend nowadays, at the end of our XXth century, to take greater interest in the works and lives of our famed predecessors, in France, Germany, Great Britain and the United States. They have built the different disciplines of today's practice. Personally, I was interested to read this book after a review in *Nature* (Vol. 381, 27 June 1996) by Marcus Jacobsen. This is not only because I am French but also because I did follow courses, as a medical student, at the famous Hôpital de la Sapêtrière, in Paris. The whole nearly untouched setting, not only outside but inside as well, appeared to me, at the time, to be a kind of untouched Mecca of the French School of Neurology. I would not have been surprised to suddenly see Professor Charcot appearing on the podium holding his top hat and starting to give us a lecture with his superb artistry. This book can only enhance this impression. It is devised in nine chapters covering the different aspects of the life of Charcot and his works. It is written by three authors, one being French, who complement one another superbly not only as physicians but also as people keen on social and political history. They integrate the medical and contemporary social aspects of Charcot's education; his successful, but hard struggle for a career in Paris Medicine, his success and his major interests: Progressive Muscular Atrophy, Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (to which he gave his name), Multiple Sclerosis, Parkinson's disease, Tabes Dorsalis and naturally Hysteria. His teaching and clinical neurology was superb. Therapy at the time was drastic, even cruel, and indeed included suspension therapy intended to 'stretch the spinal cord' (sic); this was dangerous, painful and indeed rendered a patient paraplegic.

This book is really very interesting, up to the point with many unpublished documents, original drawings and photographs. It is very well made and the binding is excellent. In fact it is a book of reference for all who are interested in neurology and in medical history.

Dr Paul Dollfus, MD
Immediate Past - President of IMSOP

An Atlas of Vascular Anatomy of the Skeleton and Spinal Cord

Edited by Henry V Crock, AO, MS, MD, FRCS, FRACS
1996. 328 pp. 95 colour images and 383 black and white images and line drawings £99.50. ISBN 1-85317-302-9.

This is the first medical textbook I have read that the author has thanked his legal advisors in the preface. The following

introduction is indeed controversial. The blood supply to the spinal cord is not what Adamkiewicz said it was in 1882 and subsequent authors have thought they had confirmed. Instead of their having a single main radicular feeder to the anterior spinal artery of the thoracic cord (the artery of Adamkiewicz) with possibly one or two other smaller radicular branches, Crock maintains that there are bilateral feeding arteries at each segmental level.

This is of major practical importance, particularly to interventional neuroradiologists. Spinal arteriovenous dural fistulae are now regularly treated with histoacryl glue injection. If pre-embolization angiography of the feeder artery to AVM did not reveal any supply to the anterior spinal artery this has until now been considered a safe treatment. If however every radicular artery supplies the anterior spinal artery then glue embolization has the potential to cause paraparesis.

The only evidence to support this new theory of spinal cord vascular supply in the book are two x-rays taken of injected cadaver specimens. It is difficult to tell from these two x-rays if there are connections to the anterior spinal artery bilaterally at every segment. Although this is an atlas it would be useful to know a little bit more detail such as how many cadavers had their thoracic arterial supply looked at and how often this pattern of supply was confirmed. It is also of note that this hypothesis has never been published in a peer reviewed journal.

The author then argues that knowledge of the segmental supply to the spinal cord should change the management of cord injury. He seems to be suggesting that after cardiopulmonary bypass all patients with suspected cord injury should have myelography although it is unclear what treatment is then to follow.

It is perhaps unfair to judge a text like this on its clinical relevance. The book is a beautifully illustrated atlas and will be valuable to anatomists and other non clinical specialists. There are not only exquisite anatomical dissections, there are post mortem radiographs and line drawings. The author himself has developed the techniques available to demonstrate the vasculature of the skeleton so that the smallest arteries are preserved and the detail obtained is exceptionally fine.

This detail will be of value to those involved in developing prosthesis particularly those for the hip where preservation of blood supply to the femoral head is crucial.

In summary, this is a book that many surgeons will enjoy perusing for the illuminating detail it provides on the vascular anatomy of the skeleton. The claim that the spinal cord supply is segmental is important and should be subjected to peer review and confirmation.

Dr Robin Sellar
Consultant Neuroradiologist
*Department of Clinical Neurosciences
Western General Hospital
Edinburgh
Scotland, UK*

MR Imaging of the Spine

Edited by MT Modic

Publisher: CV Mosby, 1993: ISBN. 0 8016 6838 7: £135.00

The authors predict my only criticism in the preface to this fine text book which seeks to establish MRI as the primary investigatory tool of the neural axis. The evaluation of MRI images requires a profound knowledge of all investigatory modalities – plain films, CAT and angiography. This is well illustrated in the text with regard to the interpretation of AVMs. Primary bone lesions, fractures etc all require expert knowledge of plain films and CAT. The authors do use other modalities in their text which is well presented, illustrated and indexed. The references are authoritative, relevant and numerous. Chapter 9 though revised for the second edition is still weak and could benefit from correlation with better illustrations of the neurenteric canal, notocord and split notocord development. I like this textbook on the subject of MRI. It is a specialist book and is highly recommended to those who have considerable knowledge of the basics. A valued opinion should embrace all modalities. Excellent value at £135.00.

Dr GT Vaughan
Consultant Neuroradiologist
Department of Clinical Neurosciences
Western General Hospital
Edinburgh
UK

NeUroGastroenterology

Edited by Enrico Corazziari

*Walter de Gruyter & Co, Berlin, 1996. 410 pp. DM128.00
ISBN 3-11-015343-2.*

The title of this book is a clever play on words. NeUroGastroenterology is the outcome of an inter-disciplinary international symposium which discussed the interactions between the nervous system and visceral function, mainly the gastrointestinal tract but also the urinary system and bladder. The participants at the symposium are the authors of 37 chapters which cover a wide field from genetics through neurophysiology to clinical disorders and their management. The editor is to be complimented on the rapidity of publication; all the contributions are topical and relevant to current issues.

Readers of this journal will find of interest the four sections relating to dysfunction in spinal cord lesions. A chapter on the visceral consequences of spinal cord injury is followed by contributions on lower urinary tract dysfunction, alternations in the gastrointestinal tract and a section on the management of colorectal dysfunction in spinal cord injury patients.

This book clearly draws together the many disciplines involved in the diagnosis and management of bowel and bladder disorders which originate when there is nervous system dysfunction. The irritable bowel syndrome features prominently but other topics covered include neuro-degenerative disorders, and childhood neurological and neuromuscular diseases. The text is clear and enlivened by judicious use of tables, charts and diagrams. The references are up-to-date. NeUroGastroenterology achieves its aim of intergrating those scientific and clinical disciplines impacting upon gut and neurological disorders. Costing around £50.00 this is an excellent postgraduate text which can be highly recommended.

Ian AD Bouchier
Professor of Medicine
University of Edinburgh
Edinburgh,
Scotland.

ABC of Spinal Cord Injury

Edited by David Grundy and Andrew Swain

*British Medical Association Publishing Group, London, 1996.
3rd Edition 64 pp. £12.95 (UK) £14.00 (Abroad)
ISBN 0-727-9-1049-3.*

It is 10 years since the first edition of this excellent, concise book on spinal cord injury was published. The authors have carried out a major revision of several chapters reflecting the current advances in the spheres of pre-hospital management, transportation to hospital – preferably one with a specialised spinal centre, radiological investigations and early hospital management including not only the prevention of complications but also their treatment of SCI patients.

In addition, there is a new section on the later care of respiration in patients with high tetraplegia. The chapters on social requirements and care in the community have been updated reflecting the scope and availability in Britain. Another welcome feature is an update and extension of the section on sexual function.

The book is attractively set out with a large number of excellent illustrations many of which have been updated.

I would highly recommend this attractive, well published book for a host of readers including medical doctors, medical students, nurses, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, medical psychologists and social workers. It includes a useful list of books 'for further reading'. The publication is an excellent, practical introduction to spinal cord injury and the price should be an additional factor to purchase a personal copy.

Phillip Harris
Editor