

TEXTBOOK OF CHILD NEUROLOGY. Third edition. By John H. Menkes. Published by Lea & Febiger, 1985. 827 pages. \$78 Cdn. approx.

This popular textbook has undergone its third revision in a period of just over a decade which attests to the rapidly expanding body of new knowledge in the field of pediatric neurology. The book is written in a crisp and concise style, emphasizing the metabolic parameters of specific diseases in infancy and childhood. The text is well illustrated with several new figures and tables, although it was disappointing that examples of nuclear magnetic resonance imaging were not utilized in the chapter on brain tumours. Surely this new modality, which is particularly applicable for the study of pediatric brain tumours, is one of the most exciting developments in the past several years. The references for each chapter are comprehensive and provide the reader with an up to date review of the pertinent literature.

The third edition has added two new chapters: cerebrovascular disorders and neurologic manifestations of systemic disease. The former reviews those diseases which primarily involve the blood vessels of the central nervous system and the latter summarizes the metabolic encephalopathies as well as neurologic complications of pulmonary, hepatic, renal, cardiac, hematologic, endocrine, nutritional and neoplastic diseases.

In my opinion, the book could be improved by a chapter which introduces the reader to the subject of pediatric neurology including an approach to history taking and neurological examination. In spite of the above minor criticisms, the *Textbook of Child Neurology* is an excellent reference for medical students, house officers, pediatricians and pediatric neurologists and should be on the shelf within easy reach of any physician who cares for infants and children.

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MYASTHENIA GRAVIS. CLINICAL NEUROLOGY AND NEUROSURGERY MONOGRAPHS. Volume 5. By Hans V.G.H. Oosterhuis. Published by Churchill Livingstone. 269 pages. \$61 Cdn.

This publication on myasthenia gravis represents the personal experience of Dr. H.J.G.H. Oosterhuis in treating 500 patients over an interval of 25 years. He starts the review in an interesting manner with a chapter written by a long-term myasthenic outlining her varied history. This was quite enlightening and would be valuable reading material for some patients with myasthenia. The historical section was also of interest; it provides a framework and overall perspective to anyone who is just starting treatment of these patients. The organization of the chapters is clear, each ending with a summary and comment section. The monograph is concisely written (208 pages) and followed by a most extensive reference list of 1,125 references.

The strength of the book lies in the intensive clinical descriptions of patients. The many varied clinical expressions are well outlined by Professor Oosterhuis. The book is well illustrated with different figures, tables and graphs. Surprisingly some

outmoded forms of therapy are included in the publication, and these are not restricted to the historical section. The therapeutic recommendations do not properly reflect the newer concepts on the pathophysiology of myasthenia. For example, therapy with Ephedrine and the use of mechanical aid devices is advocated. A much greater emphasis on the use of immunosuppression in the management of myasthenia would have enhanced this publication.

Overall I found that the text was educational and well worth reading, keeping in mind the reservations about present-day therapy.

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EVOKED POTENTIAL PRIMER: VISUAL, AUDITORY AND SOMATOSENSORY EVOKED POTENTIALS IN CLINICAL DIAGNOSIS. By Rainer Spehlmann. Published by Butterworth Publishers, 1985. 400 pages. \$39 Cdn. approx.

This book is an introduction to the use of evoked potentials in clinical diagnosis. Although it is similar in format to the author's "EEG Primer", it is quite different in style. The "EEG Primer" distilled the literature and provided wise counsel; the "Evoked Potential Primer" reviews much more literature and presents much less judgement.

The book is a complete and up-to-date review of the literature on the evoked potentials. Just over 1500 papers are referenced by a well organized text. If one wishes to look up a paper discussing the effects of disease A on evoked potential Z, this book is very good. I certainly found papers that I had not previously come across in my haphazard reading.

Some of the book's many tables are very helpful. I particularly liked the tables classifying abnormal waveforms and suggesting clinical interpretations for each. There are few other places to find an interpretative sequence that goes from the recorded waveform toward the pathology rather than vice versa. At times, however, the tables in the present volume are more tedious than helpful. One does not really need to know all the possible ways of classifying the evoked potentials. It is better to know a few and to understand their hierarchy — to have a schema rather than a list.

One very frustrating aspect of this book is its scarcity of numbers. I agree that each laboratory should gather its own normative data. Nevertheless, these values must be compared to those already in the literature. The means and the variances of the measurements in one laboratory should be the same as those in another, or at least explainably different. Unfortunately, the book does not provide the reader with sample data for comparison. Nowhere in the book is there any mention that the normal interpeak latency between waves I and V of the brainstem auditory evoked potential in an adult is 4 ms or that the upper limit of normal for this interval is 4.5 or 4.6 ms. The reader will also search in vain for information about the incidence of abnormal visual evoked potentials in multiple sclerosis or the relationship between height and latency in the somatosensory evoked potentials.