

month of life, and it is easier to reach these children a few months after birth. BCG vaccine can be given at this time as well as other vaccines.

We also want to stress that the distribution of cases having purified protein derivative results of less than 5 mm induration at 12 months were found to be 33% in babies given BCG in the first three days of life and 13% in the babies vaccinated at the third month instead. So differences of immunity are about 20% instead of 7%.

BOOK REVIEWS

Modern Perspectives of Child Neurology. Edited by Y Fukuyama, S Kamoshita, C Ohtsuka, and Y Suzuki. (Pp 360; price not stated, hardback.) The Japanese Society of Child Neurology, 1991.

This book consists of a series of papers presented at the Joint Convention of the 5th International Child Neurology Congress and the 3rd Asian and Oceanian Child Neurology Congress in Tokyo in 1990. There are contributions from some leading figures in the field of child neurology. The topics covered provide a comprehensive account of various neurological conditions, some pertaining to children of a particular background including the tropical countries. The remaining conditions notably febrile convulsions, epilepsy, metabolic disorders, and neuromuscular disorders have a wider emphasis and are less likely to be influenced by the country of origin. The diagnostic power of magnetic resonance imaging and computed tomography scanning is widely accepted but equally important are contributions from biochemistry, genetics, and virology in clinical diagnostics. There are new ideas put forward in management from advances in psychology, pharmacology, and molecular biology. The development of rehabilitation services for children are discussed in socioeconomic circumstances that vary from a country with an advanced economy to others that are less well off. An attempt to set up such a service is highlighted in a slum area where children with mental handicaps had been identified.

There are nine parts to this book and within each part are subsections consisting of papers presented at this meeting. The topics selected include metabolic encephalopathies; neurological infections in childhood; immunisation and child neurology; febrile conditions and their outcome; intractable epilepsies in infants and children; learning disorders in children; newer treatment for neuromuscular disorders; rehabilitation and child neurology; and neurology in tropical countries. A variety of information is incorporated within each part through a selection of papers with authors from different countries. Part 1 for instance, opens with three subsections including acquired encephalopathies with a Reye or Reye-like presentation; chronic encephalopathy with ragged-red fibres: with particular references to mitochondrial myopathy, encephalopathy, lactic acidosis and stroke-like episodes (MELAS); and Leigh's syndrome: clinical and biochemical correlates. Some of the remaining

parts of the book tend to be more extensive with five to seven subsections each related to a common theme.

The information presented is both understandable and useful to the clinician. There are extensive lists of references which would be valuable to those involved in research. The printing, illustrations, and the tables are of high standard on good quality paper. The contents are well set out, though it would have been helpful to have had an index section at the end of the book. *Modern Perspectives of Child Neurology* is not a conventional textbook dealing with diseases of the nervous system in children but it is a timely text containing information on many advances in child neurology of the 1980s. Though largely directed towards the specialist a significant advantage of this book is that it contains information for the general paediatrician with an interest in neurology.

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The Pediatric Anesthesia Handbook. Edited by Charlotte Bell, Cindy Hughes, and Tae Hee Oh. (Pp 626; £26 paperback.) Mosby-Year Book, 1991. ISBN 0-8016-0230-0.

Each chapter of this book starts with a short poem or nursery rhyme relevant to the chapter contents. The quotation at the beginning of the chapter on newborn resuscitation reads 'Where did you come from, baby dear? Out of everywhere into here'. Suitably modified this quotation could have formed a preface for the book: 'How did we write you baby dear? We put everything into here'.

This handbook covers paediatric anaesthesia, resuscitation of the newborn, preoperative assessment, postoperative recovery and pain relief, and some elements of paediatric intensive care. It is designed as a bench book, is spiral bound, and of a size that would fit in a white coat pocket, just. The book mixes standard text and tables to good effect and each chapter has a reasonable bibliography including references as recent as 1990. Much of the information in this book is excellent—in particular the chapter on paediatric syndromes and anaesthetic implications is the most useful I have been anywhere.

What criteria do we require in a bench book? Firstly it must be easy to use. In some respects the editors achieve this, the standard of the tables is very high and they provide easy access to a great deal of information. The index, however, is very poor and makes it difficult to find the information. Although there is an account of anaesthesia for the infant with pyloric stenosis, neither pyloric stenosis, nor Ramstedt's procedure appear in the index. Secondly the information provided has to be accurate and complete. There are too many inaccuracies and omissions for this to be the case. The section on acute epiglottitis does not include any details of antibiotic treatment. In addition for British anaesthetists many of the techniques described, while acceptable in North America, are less relevant this side of the Atlantic.

The preface indicates that the book is intended to be for junior anaesthetists and non-paediatric anaesthetists who anaesthetise children, if this is the case it would seem difficult to justify the amount of material only of relevance to specialist paediatric anaesthetists, for example paediatric liver, cardiac, and

heart-lung transplantation and neonatal anaesthesia. There is certainly a need for a bench book in paediatric anaesthesia, unfortunately this book does not succeed and I cannot recommend it to British anaesthetists.

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Fragile X Syndrome—Diagnosis, Treatment, and Research. Edited by Randi Jensen Hagerman and Amy Cronister Silverman. (Pp 378; £61 hardback.) Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991. ISBN 0-8018-4169-0.

The fragile X syndrome is characterised by X linked mental retardation and very little else—no dramatic physical features to aid diagnosis, no reliable diagnostic test to detect carriers, and no explanation of the bizarre observation that an unaffected male can be a carrier for the condition.

This all changed in 1991: the enigma became a multimedia star. A unique mutation mechanism was discovered, the molecular basis of the mode of inheritance was published, and new, precise diagnostic methods became available. A stretch of DNA within a gene on the X chromosome can become unstable, increase in length in succeeding generations, and disrupt the function of the gene. So much for the exciting molecular genetics—what about the patient?

The editors of this book on fragile X syndrome seek to provide a contemporary review of this disorder. The scope of the book is appropriately wide, and the audience is meant to include clinicians and paramedical professionals. Part I is diagnostic in flavour, with chapters on the physical features in males and females, epidemiology, cytogenetics, DNA studies, neuropsychology, differential diagnosis, and theoretical models that account for the unique mode of inheritance. Part II is directed more towards management with chapters on genetic counselling, medical care, pharmacotherapy, psychotherapy, and education. Many of the authors are from Denver, Colorado, and this volume represents their many years of experience at the Children's Hospital there.

The strengths of this book are in the clinical and management chapters. In particular, the chapters on the physical presentation, neuropsychology, and education are excellent; these chapters alone are sufficient to justify a position for this book on the shelves of general paediatricians or therapists dealing with children. The otherwise excellent chapter on differential diagnosis is marred by poor photographs. The elements of family counselling and medical care are well summarised.

Unfortunately for the authors and editors, the rapid progress made in fragile X research last year has rendered much of the information about molecular genetics, carrier detection, and family studies out of date. The editors have added brief notes at the end of appropriate chapters, but anyone involved in counselling families with this disorder must follow the current literature. Notwithstanding this problem of timeliness, the chapter on DNA studies is very inadequate. Conventional genetic linkage studies still have a role in counselling families with this disorder. Such studies are expensive and time consuming, yet no attempt is made to discuss efficient and effective strategies for linkage analyses. The information required for accurate genetic counselling of families is spread over the chapters on epide-