

Book Reviews

ADVANCES IN OTOLARYNGOLOGY, HEAD AND NECK SURGERY VOLUME IV

E. N. Myers, C. D. Bluestone, D. E. Brackmann
and C. J. Krause, Mosby Year Book: St. Louis.
ISBN: 0-8151-6262-6. 1990. Price £47. Pp 198.

Both book and the authors have matured since this series first emerged. They have become even more selective and penetrating as well as critical in their selection of that which they regard as new and valuable. A considerable amount of detail is incorporated, coupled with a voluminous and well selected set of references.

FESS is now being applied to children in whom the scale, scope and desirability of this type of surgery is carefully analysed. New batteries of vestibulometric tests, coupled with a (doubtfully new) entity of disabling postural vertigo due to vascular abnormality in the cerebellopontine angle are lengthy features. The major practitioners of cochlear implants discuss the state of the art, with, wisely muted, enthusiasm. The provision of hearing aids is, in sympathy with trans-atlantic practice, unshamefully commercial. The management of secretory otitis media has become something of a saga, the trials and tribulations of which are closely debated.

This is more than a review of progress. It is a small up-to-date textbook. Each library should have one. Those who've seen its predecessors will value this one, since it remains an excellent adjunct to further education, and is to be warmly recommended.

P. McKelvie

VERTIGO. ITS MULTISENSORY SYNDROMES

Thomas Brandt. Springer-Verlag. Berlin.
ISBN 3-540-19636-6. Price DM146. Pp 329. Figs 88.

The preface to this book begins with the heartening if perhaps questionable statement 'Vertigo consists of a variety of syndromes which are surprisingly easy to diagnose and can in most cases be treated effectively'. The author is Professor of Neurology at Munich University and well known for his many distinguished contributions in the field of posturography and vestibular research. This is clearly reflected in the choice of topics, the author's own clinical experience and the particular emphasis upon the neurological and pathogenetic aspects of vertigo. Thus central vestibular disorders we are told are the cause of the vertigo in up to 30 per cent of

those patients whose main complaint on presentation is vertigo. This presumably is why peripheral disorders merit only some 50 pages or so of the book. It is organized in sections covering various subdivisions including peripheral labyrinthine disorders (Menieres disease, vestibular neuritis, perilymph fistulae) central vestibular disorders (vestibular epilepsy, down beat/upbeat nystagmus) positional, vascular, traumatic and familial vertigo in childhood and vertigo related to drugs. Also included are extensive chapters on non-vestibular psychogenic and physiological vertigo.

The clinical features of each disease are clearly described and a particularly useful attribute of this book is the way these are summarized in tabular form in each chapter.

The pathogenesis of vertigo is covered in some detail with extensive reference to recent advances in sensorimotor physiology.

Some of the conclusions may be controversial, for example a considerable proportion of traumatic vertigo is due to dislodged otoconia—there is a surprisingly good long-term prognosis in patients with drop attacks—nevertheless most are thought provoking and merit attention.

The book is generously illustrated with examples of electronystagmographic tracings but their interpretation may present something of a problem to the uninitiated. Indeed there is a presumption throughout the book that the reader is familiar with the kind of diagnostic test procedures (balance plate measurements, optokinetic nystagmus, pursuit tests, caloric and rotational tests *etc*) which are usually described at some length in other textbooks. This in itself is no bad thing but the morphology of oculomotor abnormalities is dependent in no small measure upon the detail of the test procedure and it would have been helpful to have been given more information on the author's methodology.

Although extensive coverage is given to up beat and down beat nystagmus, and ocular tilt, it is disappointing to find little mention of the many varieties of spontaneous nystagmus, the identification of which is helpful in the diagnosis of central lesions.

The final chapters occupying about one third of the book are devoted for the most part to topics involving the author's own research—visual vertigo, height vertigo, motion sickness, vision and posture, somatosensory influences and so forth. Some of the diagrams call for a certain amount of visual orientation to establish their meaning; nevertheless these chapters make interesting reading and deal in a comprehensive way with the many non-vestibular mechanisms which can contribute to imbalance and disorientation.

The book is extremely well written throughout and offers a different slant to vertigo to that usually adopted in other texts. In particular Prof. Brandt is to be congratulated for drawing our attention to the fact that any examination of