

Blume speculates on the possibility of increased free fatty acid and prostaglandin production as the common mechanism underlying vascular headache in both migraine and epilepsy associated with cephalic ictal pain.

There is an interesting section by several authors exploring the epidemiology and genetic aspects of migraine and epilepsy and speculating on the possible links in selected instances. There is unanimous agreement, however, that despite the striking association in certain instances there is unanimous agreement, however, that despite the striking association in certain instances there is no proof of pathophysiologic correlation or genetic link between these two disorders.

One section details pathophysiologic studies that may explain some of the underlying mechanisms in the phenomena of migraine and epilepsy. Some suggest a link between regional cerebral blood flow changes and spreading depression in migraine. Other data are presented on intracellular calcium mobilization and the effects on release of excitatory and inhibitory neurotransmitters and the authors speculate on the relationship to these two clinical phenomena.

This volume illustrates the apparent tantalizing link between migraine and epilepsy. Both disorders are paroxysmal and may share a mechanism of excessive neuronal discharge (although this phenomenon is most important in epilepsy). The two phenomena may also share some aspect of spreading depression but this mechanism appears to be important predominantly in the migraine phenomenon. There is a certain amount of repetition and redundancy in some sections but this is difficult to avoid in a volume derived from a meeting of this nature. The final chapter by Andermann is an unbiased evaluation of the data and concepts presented in this volume and summarizes current knowledge in this area. Neuroscientists interested in the relationship between these two phenomena and the mechanisms underlying these clinical syndromes will find this a particularly worthwhile book.

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"THE EARLY STORY OF ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE". Edited by K. Bick, L. Amaducci and G. Pepeu. Published by Liviana Press, Padua, Italy. 147 pages.

This reviewer was recently honoured to be presented with an autographed copy of this seminal monograph from Dr. Katherine Bick, now the Deputy Director for Extramural Research at the National Institutes of Health (Bethesda, Maryland). Together with her co-editors, Professor Luigi Amaducci and Dr. Giancarlo Pepeu (University of Florence, Italy), Dr. Bick has celebrated the fifth anniversary of the Italian Study Group on Brain Aging, which supported this important publication. The six chapters comprise a painstaking translation of the historical papers on Alzheimer's disease originally in German and Italian, by Alois Alzheimer, Oskar Fischer, Francesco Bonfiglio, Emil Kraepelin and Gaetano Perusini. This small text represents a first effort by the World Federation of Neurology Research Group on the Dementias to bring to present-day investigators involved in research on this condition the

thinking of the "founding fathers".

The translator has preserved the flavour of the original writers, and clinical descriptions of these first patients come alive with beautiful lucidity. Reproduction of numerous Figures from the original texts includes handwriting samples of "senile agraphy", microphotographs, and black-and-white histological drawings by the authors. A series of full-page Plates in the manuscript by Perusini includes three hand-drawings in colour, made with Abbe's camera lucida.

The reader is repeatedly struck by the care which these early workers took with their observations, and by the clear thinking as they considered a variety of theories on the possible origin of the peculiar plaques and tangles which they observed in the brains of their patients. Of special significance is the record of the original case of the 51-year-old German housewife, which Alzheimer first reported to a meeting of the south-west Germany psychiatrists held in Tubingen, November 3-4, 1906.

After reading this publication, one will very likely be humbled by the realization that these first explorers were asking similar questions to those we regard as so original today. They debated the origin of the altered substance in the centre of the plaque – from within or without? – a puzzle with which we are still confronted. They also debated the specificity of the neuropathological lesions and their correlation with the clinical state – as we are still doing. And they argued with each other about the best ways to determine which were the primary events and which were secondary epiphenomena. Nevertheless, as one reads these groundbreaking papers, history may prove an instructive experience, because the path was clearly outlined by these pioneers. As the Foreword suggests, "We have but to follow their lead through the marshy thickets. With the promise of the tools of modern scientific neurology and serendipity, it may be our generation's good fortune to reach the high ground and see the answers plainly."

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"SENILE DEMENTIA OF THE ALZHEIMER TYPE". Edited by J. Thomas Hutton and Alexander D. Kenny. Neurology and Neurobiology, Volume 18. Published by Alan R. Liss, Inc. 404 pages. \$123Cdn approx.

This publication contains the Proceedings of the Fifth Tarbox Symposium – the Normal Rockwell Conference on Alzheimer's Disease, held at Texas Tech University, Lubbock, October 18-20, 1984. The sixty contributors have provided twenty-five chapters, which are grouped under five major headings: Clinical Evaluation, Management and Treatment; Related Clinical Disorders; Epidemiology and Genetics; Basic Science; and National Prospectives and Future Directions.

Like numerous other recent publications on the organic dementias, this text contains some chapters which are little more than a rehash of previously published observations, together with some extremely novel and informative contributions by other authors. The few photographs and tables are clearly reproduced, and the alphabetical bibliographies at the end of each chapter are very well organized. It is curious why