

chapters to refresh my memory for some time to come. It is just a great shame that this book will never find its way on to the reading list of those prescribers who insist on trying out each newly marketed broad-spectrum antibiotic – an activity that in due course becomes self-fulfilling. It is becoming increasingly clear, to microbiologists at least, that as far as developing rational global policies for sensible antimicrobial prescribing is concerned, we are living on borrowed time. It's time we stated this more clearly both within the medical and veterinary professions, and more importantly to policy-makers.

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HIV and Dementia. Eds M. B. A. Oldstone and L. Vitkovic. Pp. 279. Springer-Verlag, Berlin: 1995. DM 192.00. ISBN 3 540 59117 6.

Of the many neurological manifestations of HIV infection, the HIV associated dementia motor complex has proved the most fascinating to neuroscientists and alarming to patients. There is good evidence that it is extremely rare before there is either clinical or laboratory evidence of immunosuppression but the role of viral strain, viral load, cytokines, metabolites and excitatory neurotransmitters remain under

intense study. There is scientific interest in the mechanism of a dementia with less than perfect correlation with visible pathological processes or numbers of neurones, and great clinical relevance to these studies as indicative of therapeutic potential.

This book reflects these issues and goes into some detail about most of the evidence paying particular attention to the lessons to be learnt from animal models. It has the usual advantages and disadvantages of a book based on a meeting – there are data that have not seen the rigorous editing of peer review, and there are gaps in the overall coverage, but there are also chapters that might well be missing from a text book (e.g. the detailed discussion of the animal models). One black and white figure has an intriguing legend referring to the yellow line reminiscent for UK readers of the television commentary on a snooker game which helpfully assured those watching in black and white that the blue ball was the one behind the green.

For the clinician there are excellent reviews by Johnson, Price and Wiley, and for those interested in the neurobiology of the virus about cell–cell interactions. There is little or nothing about epidemiology, public health issues or the economics of the epidemic. This is much more a book for those in the neurosciences and virology, and for interested clinicians.

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