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Book Review:

Twentieth Century Neurology - The British Contribution.

F Clifford Rose, editor. Imperial College Press, London 2002, pp 313, illus. , ISBN . 1-86094-245-8 Price: £ 42.00

This is an interesting and well-presented book. Both neurologists and neurosurgeons would find this an enjoyable read.

All of the great pioneers of British Neurology are mentioned and in many cases the personal reminiscences of the authors and background details of their lives flesh out the subjects and, reveal the personalities behind the names.

The contribution of Jackson, Bastian and Head to aphasiology is outlined. The evolution of our present theories regarding speech disturbance is detailed and makes fascinating reading. The chapters on Holmes and his early work on cortical localisation and the sensory cortex are also worthy of note. The contributions of Gowers, Wilson and Critchley are also recognised.

The development of British Neurosurgery is included in Chapters 14 to 16 inclusive. The seminal roles of William Macewen and Victor

Horsley are acknowledged. The early close relationship of British and American Neurosurgery and especially the guiding role of Harvey Cushing are described. Geoffrey Jefferson, Hugh Cairns, Norman Dott and Patterson Ross all spent a year in Boston with Cushing. It was a time of great activity and emotion with Cairns at one stage being '*determined to either shoot himself or Cushing*'.

The creation of the Society of British Neurological Surgeons in 1926 mainly due to the efforts of Geoffrey Jefferson is well documented. Even the menu of the inaugural meeting on December 2, 1926 at the Athenaeum is reproduced. *Jambon braise au Champagne* features among other delicacies.

The combined British and American Neurologists Meeting in London in 1927 is also reviewed.

More recent developments in prion and mitochondrial diseases are presented towards the end of the book and turn our minds towards the coming Century and future developments.

All in all, an intimate overview of British Neurology and Neurosurgery from which every reader will remember some notable historical details.

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