

BARONE Robert: Anatomie comparée des Mammifères domestiques. Tome 6 : Neurologie I. Système nerveux central (avec R. Bortolami). Paris : Vigot Frères éditeurs, 2004. 652 pp., 264 figs. ISBN 2-7114-8194-8, €60,00.

After eight years of intensive writing and editing, and with the support of Prof. em. Ruggero Bortolami (Bologna), Prof. em. Robert Barone has recently published the sixth volume of his standardwork on veterinary comparative anatomy.

Like in all previous issues, this volume contains again a stunning amount of data and illustrations which have been collected by the leading scientist of our profession during half a century of morphologic research and teaching.

The newest volume covers the central nervous system including the meninges and the blood vessels of the brain. Its concept and lay-out are similar to those of all previous issues. Each chapter begins with an elaborate systematic and comparative description, followed by a survey of specific characteristics of the various domestic mammals, including the rabbit, and man.

All topics are treated in great depth, as the descriptions do not only cover the gross anatomical and microscopic structure, but include also a wealth of functional and clinical data, historical information and terminological comments. The thoroughness of the book can be illustrated by the contents of the introductory chapter which fills no less than 90 pages dealing with the development of the nervous system, neuronal histology and neurology, neuronal physiology, neurological research techniques and the spatial arrangement within the central nervous system.

In the next chapters the external features and internal organisation of the spinal cord and the various brain segments are described in detail. The reading of this complex subject-matter is much facilitated by the abundant drawings, both three-dimensional and schematic, and some 200 photographs which account for almost half of the volume of the book. The text is a unique source of information, combining pure morphologic descriptions with an opulence of species-specific information, numerical data, interesting historical notes and terminological remarks. In the text and in numerous footnotes, the author gives proof of his deep insight and his critical analysis of the subjects covered. The origin of the term "accessory nerve" (p.225), the existence of the tractus corticotegmentalis (p. 209), the presence of Reissner's fibre within the central canal of the spinal cord (p. 117), the phylogenesis of the olivary nuclei (p. 217), the clinical conditions of cerebrocortical deprivation (p. 524) or split brain patients (p. 501) .... these are but a few examples of the hundreds of intriguing facts that are discussed in this work. It is evident, therefore, that this book as well as the subsequent issue dealing with the peripheral and autonomous nerves, sense organs, integument and endocrine organs, should be available to all who are professionally involved in teaching or studying veterinary morphology. On behalf of all of these, Professor Barone is wished the best of health and the unrelenting dynamism which will enable him to complete the final volume of his monumental work.

Paul Simoens