regular language, Spanish, (J Masterson *et al*), in a syllabic orthography, Kannada, (P Karanth) and in the dual writing system of Japanese (S Sasanuma) form the basis of the third section. J Masterson, CM Temple and U Frith each contribute to a section (IV) on surface dyslexia and the development of reading. The latter two chapters are particularly clearly written and complement each other: the one (by Temple) illustrating how the information processing approach can be applied to individual case studies of children and the other (by Frith) defines the progression of the different stages or strategies that occur in the acquisition of reading skills.

Section V contains two excellent reviews of normal data in relation to current models of reading (by KE Patterson and S Morton and L Henderson). In contrast T Shallice and R McCarthy draw on data from published dyslexic patients to conceptualise a multi-level model of how reading is achieved through print to sound conversion. Also included in this section is a chapter by J Deronesné and MF Beauvois who present an individual case study, not of a surface dyslexic, but a patient who has a specific deficit in their phonological reading. Their conceptualisation of the stages involved in print-sound conversion has similarities with Templin's chapter.

A neurological appendix (Part VI) presents CT scans of a number of patients described in the book.

Surface Dyslexia is definitely a specialist volume and should provide an excellent reference text for those actively involved in reading research. For the rest, however, I suspect they will have to await a more simplified summary of the field.

DM BAXTER

to provide a rationale for the use of CT in each area but most lack clinical and radiological conviction and there is no advice on whom to scan, when or especially why.

By far the largest section deals with cranio-cerebral and spinal injuries but at an elementary rather than specialist level and does not improve on the accounts available on other standard texts. Frequent references are made to the merits of the digital radiograph as a simple means of screening for injuries of the cervical spine, pelvis, abdomen and chest. In practice many body scanners as yet fail to produce digital radiographs of sufficient quality to exclude significant trauma. The chapter on abdominal and retroperitoneal injuries shows many clear pictures but failed to convince me of either the merits of CT scanning in the diagnosis of abdominal wall trauma or of the need to assess the extent of the damage surrounding an injured but functioning kidney where a therapeutic issue is not involved. The book does make well the point that CT scanning may avoid the need for an invasive technique such as angiography in many cases. The authors also suggest that peritoneal lavage should be delayed until after CT scanning of the abdomen because any residual fluid may be misinterpreted as blood. In most cases in Britain this delay, because of lack of availability of scanners, would cause more harm than good. Although the text is heavily biased towards CT scanning and tries to convince the reader of the value of scanning in limb injuries there is the rather incongruous advice that with a suitable skull fracture and clinical signs, CT scanning may not be required for an emergency life saving operation. It seems incongruous that if scanning time is available for limb injuries it may not be available to examine a critically head injured patient.

The book has little to offer the specialist within the neurosciences but it does provide a concise overview of the potential usefulness of CT scanning in trauma and will be of help to the trainee radiologist or traumatologist.

E TEASDALE

Computed Tomography of Trauma. Edited by Martin Heller, Hans-Holger Jend, Harry K Genant. (Pp 128; DM 98.00.) Stuttgart: Georg Thieme Verlag, 1986.

This inexpensive short volume provides a well illustrated comprehensive catalogue of the computed tomographic appearances of injuries in all parts of the body. The translation from German makes the English rather difficult and the text does not read easily. On the other hand each chapter is divided conveniently into easily identified sub-sections such as *anatomy*, *classification of fractures*, *examining techniques*. This facilitates the identification of aspects of special interest. Sections on "evaluation" attempt

outlined in the preface, the aim is to place advances in the neurosciences into a clinical context and this is achieved in the main. The particular emphasis in this volume being on neuromuscular disorders. As is often the case, the volume could be further improved with a more generous number of illustrations.

The rewards gleaned from any text of review articles depend on one's own interests and expertise. The initial chapters on muscular dystrophy and the molecular basis of inherited neurological diseases are of interest and serve as a helpful introduction for the uninitiated into recombinant DNA techniques, gene probes, and gene linkage. These techniques potentially will lead to isolation of the gene products responsible for various inherited disorders.

Following these chapters is an excellent contribution from Professor Newsom-Davis on myasthenia gravis and the Lambert-Eaton syndrome with explanations of how basic medical research has led to major developments in patient management. These two conditions serve as excellent models of organ-specific autoimmunity in man, and the discussion is therefore also of general application.

The physiology of calcium channel control and clinical pharmacology of calcium antagonists are reviewed by Professor Greenberg. Already well established in cardiology, neurological indications for these drugs are given with interesting prospects for potential use in ischaemia and epilepsy.

There follows a chapter on recent aspects of multiple sclerosis. In many ways I found this the least satisfactory chapter. Although genetics, immunology and imaging in multiple sclerosis are all mentioned, some of the more interesting developments are not fully covered. Magnetic resonance imaging, has made a considerable impact on the study of multiple sclerosis and promises to assist in the evaluation of therapeutic trials (a difficult area for clinical evaluation alone due to the variability in clinical course) and this technique is only briefly touched upon.

There are two chapters on movement disorders of the head and neck and neuromuscular control of speech which fit well together. The former chapter provides a simple taxonomy of the various tremors, grimaces and dystonias which affect the head and neck, a subject many find confusing. The latter chapter was perhaps less easy to immediately extrapolate to a clinical setting.

In reviewing new developments in epilepsy management the choice of drug and the surgical management of the epilepsies are stressed. The merits of anterior temporal lobectomy and amygdalohippocampectomy

Current Neurology. Vol 6. Edited by Stanley H Appel. (Pp 361; £58.00.) Chicago: Year Book Medical Publishers Inc. Distributed by Wolfe Medical Publications Ltd. 1986.

This is an excellent addition to the *Current Neurology* series and a useful text in any library, either personal or departmental. As