The book opens with an authoritative chapter on epidemiology by authors from the Center for Disease Control in Atlanta and the WHO Collaborating Centre on AIDS in France. The chapters on pulmonary manifestations and gastrointestinal disease are informative.

Neurologists will find the section on nervous system complications useful as an overview but the incidence of neurological syndromes is not given. The section on AIDS dementia complex is well written and takes most of the space. CMV encephalitis, cerebral toxoplasmosis, CNS lymphoma, progressive multifocal leukoencephalopathy, varicella-zoster and herpes simplex infections are all briefly covered. Vascular myelopathy is only quoted in a table and the neurological syndromes associated to seroconversion are not mentioned. Peripheral neuropathies are allocated one paragraph. The ophthalmological complications, in particular the florid retinopathies, are perfunctorily dealt with in a paragraph added by the editor at the end of this chapter. Some neuroradiology is included in a general chapter on radiological features.

The sections on virology (Jeffries) and immunology (Pinching) were clear and easy to read for this reviewer. The most useful part of the chapter on the spectrum of HIV infection is the appendix containing the classification system from the Center for Disease Control. Non-malignant cutaneous manifestations, Kaposi sarcoma and other AIDS related tumours and persistent generalised lymphadenopathy and immune thrombocytopenic purpura are also considered. A chapter on counselling for HIV infection and AIDS is included but seems unnecessary with the amount of information given in the rest of the book and would be better placed in the paramedical or lay literature. The lack of a chapter dealing with HIV infection and blood transfusion is, however, surprising.

This book is sensibly priced and should appeal to many doctors. Neurologists who will be seeing increasing numbers of patients with AIDS and wish to know more about the non-neurological aspects will find much useful information.

RJ Guiloff


The first edition of this multi-author text book on head injury appeared five years ago, riding a wave of optimism that the advances of computerised tomography and intracranial pressure monitoring had resulted in improved detection of intracranial haematomata and reduced mortality. In the subsequent five years, between the first and this second edition there has been time for a more sober appraisal of the impact of these and other influences, such as improved pre-hospital care and magnetic resonance imaging, upon head injuries and their outcome. Chapters on pathology of head injury and on minor head injury have been added for the second edition, while the other chapters have been re-written or revised. Although there are two British contributors this is essentially an account of practice and experience from the United States.

Partly as a result of the irregular sequence of the chapters on medical management and partly because of the differing styles of the authors of each chapter, the book reads more as a series of separate articles than as a purpose designed textbook. There are some surprising omissions. Despite emphasis in the preface on the importance of pre-hospital resuscitation, there is no mention in the text or references of several well-known papers referring to secondary brain insults, problems of pre-hospital transfer or the incidence of intra-abdominal haemorrhage in comatose head injured patients. In the chapter on radiographic evaluation, there is no mention of the CT signs of raised intracranial pressure. One figure (4-7) is clearly inverted and the abbreviation CECT is introduced without explanation; this presumably refers to contrast enhanced CT, which is seldom used in neuroradiology in practice in the UK.

A further inverted figure (5-8) mars an otherwise helpful chapter illustrating the pathology of head injury. The chapter on skull fracture covers the important issues in this presently contentious topic and is notable for containing the radiograph that everyone has heard about, but few have seen, showing an entire nasogastric tube coiled up intracranially. Maxillofacial trauma, such a common accompanying injury in patients with severe head trauma, is dealt with only in terms of its initial emergency management. The complex surgical and management problems of this injury are not dealt with. This would be a welcome addition to further editions.

The chapter on medical management of raised intracranial pressure touches on the controversial topics of steroid, mannitol and barbiturate therapy but fails to cite any of the essential recent references to these topics, papers by Muizelaar et al, Dearden et al, Schwartz et al, and Ward et al. Dimethylsulfoxide, lidocaine and ethacrynic acid derivatives are mentioned as treatment for raised intracranial pressure while ganirelix, sodium hydroxymethylurate, etomidate, althesin and propofol are not.

Chapters on intracranial and cervical vascular injuries and on reconstruction of scalp and skull defects are useful reading for the neurosurgeon who may have to face these relatively unusual problems in head injured patients. The chapter title Infectious complications of head injury seems a misnomer.

The final chapters on neuro-behavioural sequelae of head injury and on prognosis, and outcome are valuable, summarising a large amount of data. The person who reads this book will learn much about head injury, largely presented in a profusely illustrated and well tabulated format. This is an edition of the last word on head injury, but it is not the latest textbook.

JD MILLER


This book is based on a symposium held in September 1985 and sponsored by the Pierre Fabre Research Centre and is the first volume in a proposed monograph series. The editors set themsevles the task of bringing together chapters describing work in disparate areas, some relating specifically to Alzheimer's disease, others discussing techniques which are felt applicable to the problem. There is indeed breadth of chapter ranging from molecular biology through immunology to PET scan imaging, although the emphasis is on the basic sciences and there is little clinical research especially neuropsychology. Moreover papers from unrelated disciplines may be useful when presented at the symposium but lose some of their relevance on publication in a larger volume. Thus the chapter on dissociated monolayer cultures of human spinal cord strikes one as an unlikely candidate for inclusion in a book on Alzheimer's disease.

The editors appear uncertain as to whether...