

(longitudinal paraffin section of a nerve in "AIDS neuropathy" with trichrome stain) fails to demonstrate what the authors claim is "considerable loss of myelin". Errors which should be corrected are found here and there. In page 67 the text describes a case with a left temporal *Toxoplasma granuloma* but the corresponding figure shows a ring enhancing lesion in the right frontal lobe. Microglial nodules are not specific, as the authors state in the text, and not "typical of AIDS encephalopathy" as they state in figure 3.2.

Although a great deal of information has been adequately summarised by the authors and the illustrations and introductory chapters are generally clear and appealing, neurologists in training may not find enough depth in the clinical sections to make this a useful textbook. General physicians in the UK will find that part of the clinical advice given is at variance with the current practices of their neurological colleagues. The references are relatively comprehensive and up to date.

RJ GUILLOFF

**The Human Brain.** By Paul Glees. (Pp 204; £32.50.) Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988.

This is a delightful overview of the nervous system by a distinguished neuroscientist who is perhaps best known as a neuroanatomist but who has also written widely on experimental neurology and neuropathology. The book deals with more than the human brain. The range of topics touched upon is immense, encompassing evolution and developmental embryology, neurohistology, regeneration, transmission, blood supply and CSF circulation, the hypothalamus and the special senses. It is a slim volume, packed with illustrations, most of them clearly drawn line-diagrams, and can be recommended as an introduction to the nervous system for the undifferentiated medical student embarking on neuroanatomy and histology or for those in paramedical disciplines where some insight into the structure and workings of the nervous system is desirable. The treatment is necessarily superficial though informed but the value of the book lies in the pictures not in the text. The first sentence is arresting: "For the last twenty years considerable interest has been directed towards brain research". In addition to many interesting historical references there are, scattered through the

text, little examples of the author's whimsical musings such as that found in a section on ageing and dementia where there is a paragraph on the problems of retirement. Elsewhere he warns of the dangers of disco-dancing. The book is clearly recommendable to the young.

LW DUCHEN

**Trauma Management. 2nd ed.** Edited by John F Burke, Robert J Boyd, Charles J McCabe. (Pp 648; £67.50.) London: Wolfe Medical, 1988.

The latest edition of this multi-author North American book provides a comprehensive overview of modern trauma management which is particularly directed at surgeons and others in training for the emerging speciality of Accident and Emergency Medicine. The book would also be of great value for general surgical and orthopaedic surgical trainees and is sufficiently clearly written to be a reference work for emergency medical technicians.

The strength of the book is the clarity with which the principles of trauma management are enunciated in the first few chapters and re-enunciated from the perspective of each of the different specialities involved in trauma care. In the latter half of the book dealing with trauma to the individual systems, the chapters progress from the general principles of management to specific details of each pattern of injury which commonly affects different organ systems, or long bones.

The book is particularly clear in describing the well-known pitfalls in trauma management (such as delayed rupture of the "bucket handle" descending aortic tear) diagnosed by the widened mediastinum on chest radiograph. The diagnostic patterns of each common trauma syndrome are thoroughly covered in the book, and this clearly reflects the enormous experience which the authors have over a wide range of penetrating and blunt trauma.

The book has two weaknesses: there is no chapter describing injuries to the eye, and the chapter describing head injury management is lacking in clarity in comparison with the other chapters of the book.

The head injury chapter does not discuss pathophysiology of brain damage after head injury, a necessary prerequisite for rational management. There are no references to diffuse axonal injury, or to the effects of brain injury upon cerebrovascular autoregulation. Failure of autoregulation is an important pre-disposing cause of second-

dary ischaemic neuronal damage in the multiple injured patient, and the management implications for trauma patients are considerable.

The authors do not include clear criteria for admission, CT scan or skull radiography for head injured patients, and the dangers of ambulance transfer of the unconscious head injured patient are not mentioned. Intracranial pressure monitoring is occasionally mentioned but criteria for its use are not mentioned. The head injury chapter is not specifically referenced in contrast to the rest of the book.

The chapter on spinal injuries covers both blunt and penetrating trauma very fully, and reflects the North American bias in favour of operative intervention for selected patients with bony instability and neurological signs.

This practical, up-to-date and comprehensive book is recommended for all clinicians with an interest in acute trauma.

ROSS BULLOCK

**Neurotrauma: Treatment, Rehabilitation and Related Issues—2.** Edited by Michael E Miner, Karen A Wagner. (Pp 194; £45.00.) Guildford: Butterworth, 1988.

This compact multi-author volume edited by a neurosurgeon and rehabilitation specialist represents the published proceedings of the 2nd Houston Conference on Neurotrauma. As its title suggests, it is not a comprehensive text, but rather a pot pourri of issues in head and spinal injury arranged in four sections. The first of these, on acute head injury management consists of a chapter on mild and moderate head injury which reviews data that were published some three years previously in another journal. There are two chapters on barbiturate therapy, one reviewing data which has also been published and the other discussing a trial still in progress without revealing the results. There is a chapter on facial fractures which makes the curious point that these injuries may protect the brain from severe damage because of the shock absorbing nature of the facial skeleton. Although 72% of these injuries result from road traffic accidents, the value of the wearing of seat belts is not mentioned once in this chapter.

The second section, dealing with recovery from head injuries, contains a short review by Sir John Eccles followed by chapters on the use of topical anaesthetics in the relief of spasticity, EMG in studying motor function, and the use of CT and MRI in assessing brain damage. The third section, devoted to the