Glaucoma Update II. Ed. G. K. KRIEGLSTEIN AND W. LEYDHECKER. Pp. 202. $24·00. Springer: Berlin. 1983.

The 34 short papers included in this volume report on the material presented at the Glaucoma Society Meeting that was held in Carmel in 1982. The papers deal with developmental and primary open angle glaucoma exclusively. They range from basic science research topics to practical points of examination of both the angle and visual fields and with aspects of glaucoma surgery. The authors are acknowledged leaders in this subspecialty. A number of the articles reviewed the authors' work to date, while other authors presented data new at that time. Within the covers of this short book lies something for the general and specialist ophthalmologist alike. In reading the articles it is possible to spot key reviews such as that by Leydecker on the importance of lowering intraocular pressure, Shaffer on the success of goniotomy, and Brubaker on the drugs affecting aqueous secretion. Trend setters include Spaeth on the improvement of visual function following glaucoma surgery, Anderson on the role of angiotension in glaucomatous cupping, and Kreiglstein and Kitazawa on computer assisted analysis of visual fields. However, where this volume comes alive is in the extensive discussion notes which follow most chapters. These chapters are peer reviews containing both criticism and comment on the papers presented and in the process giving the reader much needed insight into the quality and appreciation of the articles.

This little book, which is marred only by an excess of misprints, is a useful addition to the library shelf of all practicing ophthalmologists. R. A. HITCHINGS

Parallel Processing in the Visual System. By JONATHAN STONE. Pp. 439. $55·00. Plenum Press: New York, 1983.

'Parallel processing' means that the visual message does not travel from the eye to the brain neatly compartmentalised in different railway coaches one after another but that it rides there astride several circus horses, one of which carries colour, another contrast, a third luminous intensity, etc.

Jonathan Stone, reared in Professor P. O. Bishop's fertile school, elaborates this notion also on the basis of his own contributions to retinal physiology in a book excelling equally in the style of its text and of its illustrations. It covers the last quarter of a century in which the physiologies of the retina, the lateral geniculate body, and the cortex advanced our understanding, and, as Professor Stone would have us think, our philosophical insight.

If one may allow oneself one specific point in connection with a book that is equally impressive in its treatment of detail and generalities, it relates to the visual streak. This is the name given to the non-radial distribution of specific ganglion cell populations, pronounced in the rabbit, observable in the cat, and manifest also in the macaque. In primates non-radial features of the retina are problematic. The eyes move in utero from lateral to ventral positions, there are differential rates of ocular growth to consider, and the degree to which the retina may slide on, or be dragged on by, the eyeball is as yet unknown. The rabbit's eyes stay put, though I have to confess to complete ignorance of leporid embryology. Brückner associates the presence of the streak with a need for scanning the horizon, and maybe tree-borne primates do this less than scared rabbits.

Stone's views on the hieratic order of the distribution of ganglion cells in areae centrales (which is the reverse of that given above) seems to indicate that speculation is premature. Ostriches, too, scan the horizon, but their vision is less lateral than that of rabbits. Presumably structure subserves function; if so, then there is no point in concentrating on mammalian eyes, which are at present in any case heavily outnumbered by non-mammalian ones.

This aside will have proved to you that this book is thought-provoking, stimulating, and worthy of attention by anyone concerned with eyes. ROBERT WEALE

Notes

European Ophthalmic Pathology Society

The European Ophthalmic Pathology Society held its annual meeting in Rome on June 5 to 8 1984. Professor Robert Y. Foos (Los Angeles, USA) was the guest of honour. The scientific programme included 33 presentations by members and guests, and 16 countries were represented. For each presentation a protocol, histopathological sections, appropriate clinical and macroscopic transparencies, and electron microscopic prints were provided. The majority of the case presentations dealt with various primary and secondary tumours of the eye and the orbit. The remainder dealt with inflammatory, toxic, metabolic, and degenerative ocular tissue reactions, and anomalies of the eye.

Professor E. Balestrazzi acted as host to the meeting. The meeting was very well organised, and the social programme presented some of the most remarkable cultural sites of Rome and of the nearby countryside. At the business meeting Professor A. Tarkkanen (Finland) was elected president and Professor A. Garner (UK) corresponding secretary. Dr J. U. Prause (Denmark) was elected as a new member. The next meeting will be held in Basel, Switzerland, and Professor B. Daicker will act as organising secretary.

Bulgarian Ophthalmological Society

This society will hold its fourth congress on 2–3 November 1985 at Sofia, Bulgaria. The languages will be Bulgarian, Russian, and English. The topics will include the retina and the vitreal body. Details from Dr Vesselin Tanev, Institute of Ophthalmology, Medical Academy-Sofia, 1431-Sofia, 1 Georgy Sofiisky Street, Bulgaria. Titles of posters to be sent before 30 December 1984 and abstracts of papers before 30 April 1985.