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Book reviews

Computertomographie. Ed. WOLF-DIETER SAGER and GUNTHER LADURNER. Pp. 184. DM98.00. George Thieme Verlag: Stuttgart. 1979.

The incredible advances in the technique of computerised tomography that have occurred since Hounsfield first introduced the idea are amply illustrated in this small book, which is a collection of papers delivered at a symposium held in Graz in 1978. The principles and clinical applications of the technique are described, and there are sections on neuroradiology and computer tomography of the chest and abdomen. For the ophthalmologist the chapters on intracranial diagnosis will be valuable and serve to demonstrate what impact this investigation has on neurophthalmology and what advantages it has over many of the alternative methods of diagnosis.

T. J. FFYTCHÉ

Documenta Ophthalmologica Proceedings Series. Vol. 21. First International Congress on Cataract Surgery, Florence, 1978. Eds. J. FRANCOIS, A. E. MAUMENEE, I. ESENTE. Pp. 561. US\$121.05. Junk: The Hague. 1979.

The management of cataracts has a never failing interest for ophthalmologists, and this excellently edited volume gives a very clear picture of the state of cataract management and particularly surgery in the western world in 1978. The congress was well planned in order to cover every aspect of the problems involved—social, medical, surgical, and optical—and the papers are divided into 7 sessions ranging between 6 and 15 papers each.

The first session deals with the social aspects of cataract and the broad principles of modern management. Of particular interest in this session was an article on the biochemistry of cataract by A. J. Bron and another broad survey of anaesthesia in cataract surgery by Ariano and Salvoni. The second session deals with cataract in the adult and covers all the technical advances which have occurred around the world, including well tried techniques with which most of us are familiar as well as phacoemulsification and ultrasonic fragmentation. In this session there are 2 particularly interesting papers, that of J. Barraquer on intracapsular lens extraction, and the other by A. E. Maumenee summing up the role of phacoemulsification. The next three sessions deal with congenital cataracts and cataracts of the young, incisions and sutures, wound healing, and surgical complications. Most of these papers are short and to the point, but again the paper by Barraquer was particularly well presented and very neatly illustrated. The last 2 sessions are concerned with the optics of aphakia and with intraocular implants. The organisers of the congress have clearly been at pains not to allow this particularly controversial part of the programme to dominate the proceedings, and the views expressed are varied and well balanced.

Most British ophthalmologists will find nothing specially new in this volume, but there are many excellently

written articles which are well worth reading. It is clear from the wide array of techniques described that there is still no clear indication of what is and what is not correct surgery for cataracts, and the widely differing views fail to show in which way cataract surgery is likely to progress over the next 20 years. There is evidently ample room for improvement and innovation.

A. D. MCG. STEELE

Gonioskopie und Goniofotografie. By W. MÜLLER and H. P. BRANDT. Pp. 163. DM88. Georg Thieme: Leipzig. 1979.

Gonioscopy has always been a difficult skill for the trainee ophthalmologist to learn, chiefly because the objective recording of the gonioscopic appearances is unsatisfactory. This volume sets out to describe the principles and practice of the technique and to display the numerous variations in normal and pathological gonioscopy. A method for goniophotography is described, and there are coloured photographs of the anterior chamber angle with a comprehensive text. Sadly the problems that beset the demonstration of gonioscopic abnormalities still exist, and the definition of many of the photographs is poor. But this is the only criticism of this excellent volume, which is to be recommended to postgraduate students and those working in glaucoma.

T. J. FFYTCHÉ

Abhandlungen aus dem Gebiete der Augenheilkunde. Vol. 48. **Das okulomotorische System, physiologische und klinische Aspekte.** By Hans Drischel and Wolfgang Kirmse. Pp. 214. DM47. Georg Thieme: Leipzig. 1979.

The title of this comprehensive treatise on ocular movements is misleading, since almost all the emphasis is on the neurophysiology of the oculomotor system and there is very little discussion on the clinical aspects that are of interest to the practising ophthalmologist.

Several authors have contributed chapters on subjects related to eye movements and their central control, and much of the contemporary experimental work in man and animals is presented with extensive references. The text contains numerous formulae and difficult diagrams and will appeal more to the neurophysiologist and research worker than to the clinical ophthalmologist.

T. J. FFYTCHÉ

The Mast Cell: Its Role in Health and Disease. Ed. J. PEPYS and A. M. EDWARDS. Pp. 873. £16.50. Pitman Medical: Tunbridge Wells, Kent. 1979.

As long ago as 1863 Friedrich von Recklinghausen noted granular cells in the mesentery of the frog, which Paul Ehrlich named mast cells in 1878. These cells are now recognised to be of major importance in immunopathology, and, although their link with basophil cells is not clear, they both have similarities in that they are recognised as sources of a wide range of potent biologically active substances. The mast cell is fixed in the tissue, and the basophil is a mobile circulating cell. It is now well known that the mast cell possesses receptors



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