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Book reviews

Clinical Ophthalmology. By JACK J KANSKI. Pp. 340. £49.50. Butterworth: Sevenoaks, Kent. 1984.

This book is intended for the trainee ophthalmologist and covers the whole field of ophthalmology. There are 17 separate chapters; curiously the page numbers are not continuous but each chapter has its own numbering, so that 7.11 means page 11 in chapter 7.

Colour illustration throughout makes this a very valuable contribution to postgraduate textbooks. The tables, coloured diagrams, and clinical photographs are all of a very high standard, and it is a pleasure to see the publishers' careful attention to page design. Clear headings make for easy reference and location of information, which will aid examination candidates in particular.

There are a few imbalances in the depth at which particular subjects are treated. Some receive detailed and definitive description, other equally common conditions receive relatively brief treatment. However, this balance is almost impossible to achieve in a textbook as comprehensive as this one, and the author has in general done well in organising the relative importance of topics. Some attention to the index will be required for any future editions, for it often misses all the text references. Again, back to the unusual page numbering, it might aid the index to revert to the conventional page numbering. Although it is perfectly possible for readers to refer to other more detailed textbooks on particular topics, it would be helpful to have enlarged sections on special investigation techniques. For example, computerised tomography receives only a quarter page description, whereas its importance in the investigation of intracranial and orbital disease has been enormous.

All in all this is an excellent and superbly illustrated textbook, a pleasure to read, and highly recommended for trainee ophthalmologists and more senior ophthalmologists for ready reference.

JAMES L KENNERLEY BANKES

Extracapsular Cataract Extraction. By JARED M. EMERY AND DAVID J. MCINTYRE. Pp. 418. No price given. St Louis, Missouri: Mosby. 1983.

Though primarily a description of technique by the two main authors, this book includes other aspects of management such as advice given in print before surgery and the precise details of what is expected of the patient postoperatively.

The descriptions of the two methods of extracapsular extraction are set out in minute detail. Nothing is taken for granted, and no item is too small to escape inclusion. A colour atlas of the steps in the surgical procedure of cataract extraction and lens implantation consolidates the detailed discussion. In addition there are chapters on Kelman phacoemulsification, the management of postoperative complications, and statistics of visual results.

There seems little doubt that the posterior chamber implant is here to stay and it will eventually supersede the iris clip. The visual results are so rapidly acquired and are so

similar to the intact eye that the effort needed to produce uncomplicated results is well worth while. The size of this book and the obsession with minutiae are a measure of the degree of effort necessary to perform in series this 'miracle' of modern surgery. The book is a must for the practising ophthalmic surgeon who wishes to be abreast of the times.

STEPHEN MILLER

Therapeutic Systems. 2nd edn. By KLAUS HEILMAN. Pp. 148. DM28. Georg Thieme: Stuttgart, New York. 1983.

In this book the author, a professor of ophthalmology in Munich, covers the whole field of these relatively new drug delivery systems which are used in many different parts of the body. The theoretical advantages of such systems are numerous. A drug can be delivered to the target organ over a fixed duration in predetermined and constant amounts of unit time. This enables a smaller dose to be given. Side effects are therefore reduced, with improvement in drug safety. Patient compliance is also improved, and this is of especial value in conditions requiring chronic administration. These systems permit the use of agents which have a short half life or are normally too toxic; plasma drug levels are kept constant.

The chief ocular therapeutic system, the Ocusert, is described at length. This was the first such system to be used clinically. Though tried in bacterial, viral, and trachomatous conditions, the only available model is the Ocusert Pilo 20 and 40 releasing 20 µg and 40 µg/hour pilocarpine respectively. The advantages claimed are that less drug is delivered over a seven-day period than the equivalent in drops, which leads to a more constant aqueous level of drug, with a reduction of side effects such as miosis and ciliary spasm. If employed in chronic closed-angle glaucoma the depth of the anterior chamber is not reduced so much with Ocusert as drops. It is not obvious from reading this book why, after the initial enthusiasm some 10 years ago, Ocusert Pilo is not employed in any quantity in the UK, though brief mention is made of cost benefit in a chapter at the end of the book.

Other systems described include transdermal, oral, contraceptive, and the osmotic pump. The oral system (Oros) can deliver acetazolamide with, it is claimed, fewer side effects. The drug is released through a hole drilled by laser in the membrane.

This book, which will be of limited interest to ophthalmologists, gives one an insight into developments in drug administration. As stated in the foreword, apart from the manufacture of new drugs there is still a need to look at the safer use of existing agents.

S. J. CREWS

Augenheilkunde in Klinik und Praxis. Vol. 3, Part 1. By H. VON J. FRANCOIS AND F. HOLLWICH. Pp. 582. DM 486. Georg Thieme Verlag: Stuttgart. 1983.

This really is a magnificent book and it is hard to avoid superlatives. It has all the excellence of its predecessors. The volume is in effect a combination of three books with contributions from eight authors—all of them professors.

The first section is devoted to disorders of eye movement and there are chapters on the diagnosis and therapy of squint by Hugonnier and Magnard, on squints in children by Otto, on amblyopia also by Otto, and on nystagmus by Kommerell. This is followed by a large section on the retina with contributions by Henkes, Deutmann, and Archer. Finally there are two small chapters on glaucoma-related subjects—gonioscopy and secondary glaucoma, both by Slezak.

The illustrations throughout are of the highest quality, and each chapter is followed by a comprehensive list of references. It is difficult in a book of such uniformly high standard to single out any particular aspect that requires special mention over the rest, equally difficult to find any fault. The contributions on squint and on retinal disease can be classed as definitive studies, and the only criticism is that the mixture is almost too rich, for we are presented under one cover with three books that could achieve great success independently.

The editors are to be congratulated on this contribution to ophthalmic teaching, and the German-speaking ophthalmologists for whom this book is written are to be envied. We look forward eagerly to part 2 and to volume 2 in the series.

T. J. FFYTCHÉ

The Eye and its Disorders. 2nd Ed. By PATRICK D. TREVOR-ROPER and PETER V. CURRAN. Pp. 628. £45.00. Blackwell Scientific Publications: Oxford, 1984.

This is a beautifully written preamble to ophthalmology. Nowhere in ophthalmology, or indeed in other scientific textbooks, will you find such exquisite English and beautifully constructed sentences. It is a delight to read, and sets out to be a guide for the candidate for the diploma in ophthalmology.

However, compared with the more tightly written and highly informative currently available textbooks it appears to be verbose and long-winded. The use of lists and diagrams to summarise a particular disease and its complications would have avoided some of this criticism. It also attempts to deal with too much, so that many important subjects are inadequately discussed. Both the clinical and surgical management of many disorders are mentioned. Inevitably in a book of this size the surgical treatment of many of the disorders is dealt with only superficially, and this aspect could safely have been excluded and left to the specialist surgical textbooks. For instance, in the treatment of congenital cataract by aspiration, only the push/pull method has been described, although there are many alternative methods available, including the use of modern aspiration machines.

Some curious omissions arise. The assessment of macular function in the presence of a dense cataract makes no mention of the Maddox rod test, the definition of optic nerve atrophy is poor, and the indications for corneal grafts are not complete, there being no place in modern surgery for the use of lamellar graft for herpes simplex keratitis, as the recurrence rate is so high. The clinical description of herpes zoster ocular involvement is poor, there being no mention of any epithelial disorders. The optic section is

inadequate, and could safely have been left to more specialised optics books. There is no mention of the optics of any instruments, there are no diagrams of the optics of refraction (and do people still use a mirror and lamp, and not a streak retinoscope, nowadays?). Not everyone would agree with atropic refraction for children, when modern cycloplegics are available. A section on spectacle intolerances would have been appreciated, and the section on ocular pharmacology is much too brief, with no mention of the action of drugs on the pupil. In the section on prisms no mention is made of their therapeutic use in orthoptic exercises.

The book serves as an easily read introduction to ophthalmology.

JAMES MCGILL

Atlas of Ophthalmic Ultrasonography and Biometry. By H. J. SHAMMAS. Pp. 321. £40.00. C. V. Mosby: St. Louis. 1984.

This book contains seven chapters, an appendix, and a glossary of terms. The first chapter, entitled 'Basic physics, technology and instrumentation,' is useful to the extent that it describes some of the jargon peculiar to ophthalmic ultrasound, as does the glossary of terms at the end of the book. Commercially available ophthalmic ultrasound instrumentation including biometric units are discussed, and the published B scans were taken using three mechanical sector systems (Ocuscan 400 from Sonometrics Systems Inc., the Ultrascan 11 from Xenotech-Cooper Medical Devices Corporation, and the Bronson-Turner unit from Storz Instrument Company). The A scans were obtained using the Kretz 7200MA ophthalmic A scan system.

The 'meat' of the book is an attempt to correlate ultrasonic findings in vitreoretinal disorders (including trauma and foreign bodies) and tumours (both intraocular and orbital) with their pathological basis and clinicosurgical implications. The page layout for this exercise is attractive, but the associated text tends to be oversimplified and confusing at best and is utterly misleading at worst. The B scan criteria of choroidal detachment, for example, are described as multiple areas of convex echogenic lines which do not involve the nerve head, so that the pathognomic signs of anterior extension to the scleral spur and tethering of the vortex ampullae and short ciliary artery insertions are left either to the reader's own extrapolation or to his imagination. The pathogenic sequences are remarkable for their naivety. We are variously informed that fibrous vitreous membranes are caused by organisation of vitreous haemorrhage; that vitreous membranes get thicker, attach to the retina, and cause traction retinal detachments on follow-up; that the coronal membrane of the triangle in massive preretinal retraction is a cyclitic membrane, etc. Remarkably, the text on vitreoretinal pathology (including that from trauma) never actually mentions the fundamentals, that is, the vitreous base and the concept, causes, and effects of epiretinal membranes.

The author stresses the value of A scan techniques in orbital diagnosis and follows the views of Ossoinig especially in measurement of the optic nerve diameter and ocular muscle thickness; the fact that such measurements defy the application of natural physical laws to the orbit should not



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