Book reviews

Aids to the Practice of Refraction. By ROBERT W. STEPHENSON. 1975. Pp. 24. Thornhill Press, Gloucester (65p)

The author intends this book for ophthalmologists. It is possibly best described as a booklet, and does not pretend to be a text on the subject. The trainee ophthalmologist inevitably finds he is required at an early stage in his career to do many quick refractions. These are often done without a background of proper theoretical or practical instruction. Later he is often forced by circumstances to do long stints of refraction, again in a hurried manner.

Thus the basis of refraction practice as an accurate diagnostic tool or its exact and correct relationship to an optical appliance is lost to the ophthalmologist. In these circumstances, the procedure becomes a bore and unrelated to the patient. This booklet raises pertinent aspects in an orderly fashion, essentially on the clinical management of patients seeking an eye examination. Since the 24 pages can be read almost at one sitting, it is sound advice that all those about to study refraction in greater depth should start with this simple outline.

MONTAGUE RUBEN

Colour Vision Test. By ROBERT J. FLETCHER. Keeler Instruments, London

The City University colour vision test has been produced by Professor Robert J. Fletcher from the Department of Ophthalmic Optics and Visual Sciences. It uses a series of selected paper colour samples, each page providing the opportunity for a normal response. The patient is asked to identify the normal 'spot' as resembling the centre spot more closely than other alternatives. The patient's choice is recorded for each page and this enables the examiner to quantify the depth of an inherited defect depending upon the number of mistakes made by the examinee. The book is smaller than the normal Ishihara chart and enclosed is a form for recording results. The test is simplicity itself if a few guide lines are followed and these are carefully explained in the introductory notes.

S. J. H. MILLER

Conference for the Prevention of Impaired Vision and Blindness, Paris 1974. (*Documenta Ophthalmologica Proceedings Series*, vol. 5). Edited by W. J. Holmes. 1975. Pp. 204, 158 figs, 52 tables. Junk, The Hague (DG65)

As blindness becomes increasingly a world problem it is essential that more efforts should be directed towards its prevention in the developing world. The scope of the problem is immense—20 million affected by onchocerciasis, 500 million affected by trachoma. The World Health Organization has now included the prevention of blindness in its activities and an International Association for the Prevention of Blindness has been formed. Its first meeting was at the International Congress

of Ophthalmology (Paris 1974) where public health ophthalmology was accepted as being a new dimension.

The contributors are principally ophthalmologists who include in their papers work from allied specialties like genetics. There are contributors from India, Pakistan, and south east Asia where blindness is rampant. There is an excellent article on homocystinuria by François, and two important articles, one from USA and one from Israel, on the prevention and treatment of hereditary eye disease. These growing points of our knowledge include prenatal diagnosis by amniocentesis and possible lines of treatment of certain metabolic diseases like Wilson's disease and homocystinuria. The book is worth obtaining for these articles alone. It concludes with several articles on the pathogenesis of retinal vein occlusion, although no one can suggest much in the way of prevention.

C. A. BROWN

Functional Examinations in Ophthalmology, Parts I and II (Fourth Congress of the European Society of Ophthalmology, Budapest, 1972). Edited by J. FRANÇOIS. 1974. Pp. 692, 343 figs, 47 tables, refs. Karger, Basel (£30-60)

In Part I virtually all methods, both objective and subjective, now available for the investigation of ocular function are dealt with. Emphasis is laid on the importance and use of such methods in research, and also in clinical diagnosis where, for example, it is often only possible to understand and classify the multitude of choroido-retinal infections after duly considering the combined results of such tests as visual acuity, static and dynamic perimetry, disturbances of colour vision, dark adaptation, and electrodiagnostic investigations.

Part II comprises free papers which in one way or another relate to the methods now available for the investigation of ocular function.

D. GREAVES

The History and Traditions of the Moorfields Eye Hospital, vol. II. By F. W. LAW. 1975. Pp. 299, 70 illustrations. Lewis, London (£4)

Moorfields is a unique hospital; the oldest and still probably one of the largest eye hospitals in the world, it has had a major influence on ophthalmology ever since it was founded in order to cope with the trachomatous soldiers returning from the Napoleonic wars. The history of Moorfields thus reflects the whole evolution of scientific ophthalmology from the simple empirical *nostra* of 1805 to its present complexity, against a colourful background of medical politics and personalities. The travails and triumphs of Moorfields up to the first world war had already been recorded by Treacher Collins in 1929, but only three copies of this admirable book have evidently survived. So, by a happy arrangement, facsimiles of this earlier book have now been published with Frank Law's second volume, bringing the story up to date—or rather up to 'yesterday', since it went to press just before our last Minister of