

## Book reviews

**Progress of Lens Biochemistry Research: Ophthalmologica Proceedings Series. Vol. 8.** Edited by A. HOCKWIN. 1976. Pp. 316, 124 figs., 67 tables, refs. Junk, The Hague (Dtch. Glds. 95)

This is a review volume comprising papers by some 33 authors in honour of Professor Dr Med. J. Nordmann. The first few papers give an interesting account of morphological changes as revealed by the electron microscope in galactose and diabetic cataract. Others deal with tissue culture of the lens epithelium.

In one paper it is shown that lens fibres can again become undifferentiated, and the cells so formed appear identical to those composing the original lens epithelium. Other topics dealt with in detail include factors affecting mitosis, the relationship of proteolytic enzymes and calcium content to cataract formation, the biochemistry of ageing changes, and cataracts induced by toxic agents.

This book should be read by all those actively engaged in the biochemical and metabolic aspects of crystalline lens research.

R. F. FISHER

**XIIth ISCERG Symposium, Clermont Ferrand, 20–22 May 1974.** Edited by R. ALFIERI and P. SOLÉ. 1976. Junk, The Hague (Dtch. Glds. 125)

The twelfth ISCERG symposium was held in 1974 and unfortunately there has been some delay in the publication of the papers. However, the volume provides a useful insight into recent developments in electrodiagnostic ophthalmology. There are several useful papers on electroretinography and electrooculography in relation to macular function, and the meeting opened with two good reviews of relevant advances in the anatomy of the retina and visual pathways. Several of the free papers are of interest, ranging from the measurement of saccadic eye movements by electrooculography to an analysis of the waveform of the electroretinogram in Oguchi's disease. The four papers on the visually evoked response reflect the increasing interest in this aspect of visual function, and give hope for future clinical applications.

N. GALLOWAY

**Symposium on Ocular Therapy. Vol. 9.** Edited by I. H. LEOPOLD and R. P. BURNS. 1976. Pp. 161, figs., tables, refs. John Wiley, Chichester (\$13.75)

This latest volume in a popular series has yet again managed to introduce new material with 21 authors writing 12 chapters on a wide variety of subjects. There are two interesting chapters on methods of prolonging local drug action. Maichuk describes work in the USSR on four polymeric drug delivery systems including an erodable insert (SODI), and Pavan Langston reviews experience with non-erodable inserts (Oculoserts), both authors quoting trials in glaucoma, herpes keratitis, and

trachoma. Kaufman describes progress in antiviral agents, Leopold considers the site of action of anti-inflammatory agents—a useful chapter for those wishing to be brought up to date in the changing field of immuno regulation.

In a study of endophthalmitis vitreous aspiration was found to be of more value than anterior chamber paracentesis and the safety of intravitreal injection of gentamicin is examined. Some theoretical considerations of injection of drugs into the vitreous are described by Maurice. There is an excellent description of practolol toxicity from Wright and Fraunfelder, also a review of platelet inhibition therapy in occlusive vascular disease, and an interesting article on compliance in patient therapy from Kass and Becker. Other subjects include the experimental uptake of epinephrine in aphakic animals, haloperidol mydriasis, and cycloplegia. The book finishes with a useful review of tissue adhesives.

Though the cost may deter some purchasers the volume is well produced with good illustrations.

S. J. CREWS

**Epidemiology of Onchocerciasis.** Report of a WHO Expert Committee. Technical Reprint Series 597, 1976. Pp. 94, figs., refs. World Health Organisation, Geneva (Swfr7)

This third report of a WHO Expert Committee on Onchocerciasis states quite rightly that the last 10 years have seen considerable advances in knowledge of this disease and of its epidemiology. These are reported under the following headings: the disease, the parasite, the vectors, *Onchocerca*—*Simulium* complexes, human host factors, environmental and socioeconomic factors, and diagnosis (including immuno-diagnosis); finally, there is a detailed description of the special epidemiological features of onchocerciasis and the evaluation of control programmes. The Volta River Basin Area Control Programme is described in some detail.

A main feature of the booklet is that it points out the gaps in knowledge of the disease, and each chapter ends with short paragraphs on research needs. Since the WHO gives priority to onchocerciasis under the new special programme of research and training in tropical diseases, there is a good chance that funds will be made available for research projects following the recommendations outlined here.

Relatively little priority has been given to ocular onchocerciasis considering it is this aspect which justifies costly control programmes. Only 1 of the 14 main contributors is an ophthalmologist. The ocular field is wide open, and it is hoped that this booklet will encourage more ophthalmologists to become actively involved in this fascinating parasitic panophthalmitis.

JOHN ANDERSON