Book reviews


This latest edition in the well-known series 'Advances in Ophthalmology' comprises 7 articles on a variety of topics. Three are concerned with certain aspects of glaucoma. Jerndal and Svedbergh describe the gonioscopic changes in patients with exfoliation glaucoma and consider that the basic abnormality lies in a primary genetic goniodysgenesis with an accompanying vasculo-pathy of the iris. Tsukahara reports focal leakage of fluorescein from the disc capillaries in cases of glaucomatous cupping, although its cause remains obscure. And Tsukahara and co-workers correlate field defects with cup-disc ratios and fluorescein angiographic findings in glaucomatous optic atrophy. Capillary filling on the disc is grossly reduced in progressive cupping, and the pattern of filling and non-filling can be closely correlated with field defects. Capillary changes, however, were not found to facilitate the prediction of future disc damage or field loss. The heredity of the choroidal dystrophies is discussed by François with particular reference to Sorsby's pseudoinflammatory dystrophy, choroidal sclerosis, gyrate atrophy, and choroideremia.

The longest article is by Leuenberger on the functional morphology of the cornea. This is well illustrated by light and electron microscopy, and the physiology of corneal transparency and healing are discussed. Two short articles complete this edition. Demeler describes the value of fluorescein angiography in the management of iris tumours. Although the angiogram may not be diagnostic it can provide useful information on the growth of lesions, and examples are shown. Haase discusses optical penalisation by atropine in the treatment of amblyopia in squints and sets out guidelines for its use.

The editorial policy of mixing review articles with original papers is continued in this edition, and the specialised nature of many of the presentations, some of which are in French or German, means that this volume is unlikely to have universal appeal. But as part of an on-going series on ophthalmic topics it will have a valued place in any reference library.  

T. J. Fytyche


This book is aimed at postgraduate students starting in ophthalmology and provides an adequate survey. It covers the various types of glaucoma and deals usefully and at length with the technique of projection perimetry. It also contains the nomograms for coefficient of outflow by tonography, and there is an amusingly illustrated section on the evaluation of cupping of the optic disc. It can be recommended to the people at whom it is aimed and is recommended as a stand-by in any department of ophthalmology, as it contains a comprehensive bibliography.

W. E. S. Bain


The most recent contribution to what is perhaps the youngest subspecialty in ophthalmology, this is the proceedings of an international symposium held in April 1975. There are many distinguished contributors and associate authors, though some distinguished names are absent. It is always a pity that it should take 2 years for such an important volume to appear, though it should remain up to date for some years to come.

Sections are devoted to every aspect of vitreoretinal surgery, and there are really excellent and original contributions on vitreous structure, function, and pathology as well as on preoperative evaluation. Instrumentation, indications, techniques, and results have been described in detail elsewhere, but this book treats all of them fully and includes detailed discussion of the problems of management of the lens during vitrectomy. From the surgical aspect it concentrates on surgery of the vitreous and vitrectomy, and there is very little on vitreoretinal problems. In particular, there is only one contribution on the surgical treatment of massive vitreous retraction. It is most unfortunate that this should be considered in a section on so-called vitreous substitutes, since the evidence presented emphasises the inappropriateness of the concept of substitution of vitreous by liquid silicone, and emphasises the need for membrane elevation in the treatment of massive vitreous retraction. One other contribution condemns liquid silicone in the traditional fashion, but without presenting evidence for doing so.

All in all, this is an outstanding book, beautifully illustrated, which contributes significantly to present knowledge of vitreoretinal pathology and surgery.

J. D. Scott


Ophthalmologists, like pigeons, can be trained by the repeated presentation of a question followed by a reward for the correct answer. Success breeds enthusiasm, more success, and reinforcement of existing knowledge. Reinecke and Miller apply the educationalist B. F. Skinner's tenets to the teaching of 'debutante' ophthalmologists with great success. The book takes one from the simplest possible question to ones which demand answers precise and informed enough to test the more

This comprehensive treatise on the side effects of drugs used in the management of ocular disease fills a gap in ophthalmic literature. The authors preface their study of the individual therapeutic agents by a valuable discussion on the biochemistry and pharmacology of ophthalmic drugs in general. Thereafter each system from the lids and lacrimal apparatus to the oculomotor system is discussed in depth in relation to the drugs used in treatment.

The latter half of the book is concerned with the toxicology of ophthalmic medications, their carcinogenic and teratogenic properties, and with methods of investiga-
tion of drug side effects. This book will find its main value as a source of reference, although the general chapters are recommended for postgraduate reading. Many of the drugs are not in common use in the United Kingdom, but the list is comprehensive and includes all contemporary forms of therapy.

D. R. Taylor


It is a pleasure to review this second edition with its improved type face and excellent diagrams. The whole subject of strabismus surgery is shown clearly, and the commentary gives adequate additional information. The new sections are concerned with superior oblique muscle operations, the Faden operation, adjustable sutures, and other special surgical techniques for special strabismus problems. These are all welcome but cannot be praised uniformly.

The temporal approach for superior oblique tenotomy seems to have little to recommend it over the direct, nasal route, and what is referred to as ‘recession’ of the superior oblique is described more accurately as a controlled or bridled tenotomy. More disappointing is to find that the anterior half antero-lateral advancement of the superior oblique is totally incorrectly designated as ‘sagittalization’ of the superior oblique insertion. In this operation the line of muscle action is moved further away from the sagittal plane towards the coronal plane. However, the procedure is of great value in correcting the torsional diplopia of bilateral fourth nerve pareses.

A useful description of the Faden operation (‘posterior fixation suture’ or ‘thread operation’) and some of its indications is given but the point is not made that care must be taken to avoid the long posterior ciliary vessels and nerves when operating on the horizontal recti. This is why it is important to detach these muscles when this technique is used. A good account of the method and advantages of the adjustable suture for inferior rectus tethering in thyroid myopathy is given. There is a useful, but partisan, bibliography with only 2 European references out of 69. Where surgeons’ names are recorded they should be spelled correctly—O’Connor and Schilinger have not been corrected from the first edition and Mühlendyck suffers here.

Criticisms notwithstanding, this is the best available text on strabismus surgery, and it is to be hoped that the third edition will continue to record the advances in techniques in this fascinating subject.

Peter Fells


As with all multi-author volumes, there is wide variation between chapters, with some overlap. These chapters are arranged in anatomical order, beginning with drug action on ocular muscles, and going on to the conjunctival sac, corneal epithelium, stroma, and endothelium, with a discussion also on techniques of investigating the cornea (by Maurice). There follows chapters on aqueous formation and drainage, iris and ciliary body mu
cules, lens, vitreous, synaptic transmission in the retina, vascular proliferation in the eye, and finally, a useful review of the ocular side effects of drugs (Bernstein).

Many of the contributors are basic scientists and much of the material represents experimental work in animals which may not be applicable to man. There is certainly a wealth of information, but much of it is not of immediate interest to clinicians, and one doubts if some of the more elementary anatomy and physiology is essential. The index is useful, and most chapters have a fairly extensive bibliography.

S. J. Crewe


This well-presented account of the proceedings of a congress held in July 1977 in Troy, New York, has appeared with staggering speed. Therein lies a large part of its value. For it is arguable that every contributed crumb is likely to be a titbit, but to be allowed an insight into current thinking on colour, however transitory, is a privilege to be valued and acknowledged. Notably absent among the 8 invited lectures is one on the physiology of colour vision. However, colour in industry receives good representation, and in the other papers there is some discussion of colour defects, colour appearance, and the role of colour in design, art, and architecture.