Book reviews

Fortschritte der Kiefer- und Gesichts-Chirurgie. Vol. 22. Periorbitale Chirurgie. Anomalien, Krankheiten und Geschwülste der Gefäße. Edited by KARL SCHUCHARDT and RÜDIGER BECKER. 1977. Pp. 225, figs., tables, refs. Georg Thieme Verlag, Stuttgart (DM238)

The product of many contributors, this book (in German) deals with the classification, causes, diagnosis, and treatment of orbital and periorbital problems. It covers the subject fully but sometimes in a rather superficial manner.

Some chapters are of greater interest than others, for example, that on the use of miniplates in the reconstruction of the orbital margin. Others treat their subjects loosely, as in the articles dealing with ptosis. The search for the perfect, universally acceptable procedure for correcting ptosis continues, but only 2 cases are cited by the author of the paper on the use of the frontalis muscle taken through the frontal sinus to simulate the more natural line of pull of the upper lid. There is a section dealing with late reconstruction of the orbit using Silastic implants. Satisfactory results are reported with the use of the magnetic implant. The section dealing with craniofacial abnormalities suffers from having to follow the high standard set by Tessier. The article dealing with basal cell carcinoma claims that there is less recurrence if the lesion was not previously radiated or surgically treated, and the claim is substantiated on the basis of 426 cases. Haemangiomas receive attention with the claim that cryotherapy is satisfactory for small lesions but only palliative for larger ones.

This is an interesting book, up to date, easily readable, if one is fluent in German. The references are good but not complete, and refer mainly to the European literature, so that they may be helpful especially to those readers who are not familiar with it.

A. WEBB

Die therapeutische Anwendung von ionisierenden Strahlen in der Augenheilkunde. By P. LOMMATZSCH. 1977. Pp. 148, figs., refs. Georg Thieme, Leipzig (DDR 27)

The scope of radiotherapy in ophthalmology has undergone considerable contraction in the past 20 years, largely as a result of the development of medical measures for effectively dealing with many of the chronic non-neoplastic lesions encountered, coupled with the important advances that have taken place in the surgery of neoplasms arising in relation to the eye. In these circumstances it is refreshing to welcome a book on the use of ionising radiation in the treatment of diseases of the eye and its related structures.

The authors, of whom the senior, Dr Lommatzsch, is a well-known ophthalmologist, all practise in East Berlin, and the range of subjects covered and the standards set do them the utmost credit. Approximately half the book is devoted to an account of the physical and biological bases of radiotherapy, including sections

on protection and radiation technique. The section on physics is detailed, thorough, and up to date, covering electron beam therapy, neutron therapy, and treatment by linear accelerators. It is interesting to note that the radiation doses are quoted in the newly proposed Gray unit, which has not been generally adopted in Britain (1 Gy = 100 rads). The amount of information contained in this section will probably prove daunting to the average ophthalmologist but should impress the radiotherapist. The section on technique covers treatment by x rays ranging from low voltage to megavoltage, gamma and beta ray therapy, and electron beam therapy. The authors mention the methods they themselves use and illustrate where applicable the apparatus developed by them, but the whole chapter is so condensed and overlaid with relevant references to other workers that there are no clear indications or details of the precise technique the authors would recommend when using a particular piece of equipment for a particular lesion. A similar criticism can be levelled at the chapter on the treatment of individual tumours affecting the eye, orbit, lids, and epibulbar region, namely, there is a concentration on references with no clear picture of what the authors themselves recommend. There is an adequate chapter on the radiosensitivity of the ocular and adnexal tissues and a most interesting chapter on the use of radiation in inflammatory and non-malignant lesions of the eye. The latter chapter is of course mostly of historical interest, but it is still worth perusing if only for this reason.

The book is well produced and illustrated and contains a remarkably complete and up-to-date bibliography. It should prove of great value as a reference book for any ophthalmologist or radiotherapist interested in this special field.

M. LEDERMAN

Drugs and the Eye. By JANET VALE and BARRY COX. 1978. Pp. 126, figs., tables. Butterworth, London (£5.50)

This book is designed to be a detailed and yet concise account of drugs and their use in the eye and to be a working guide for qualified ophthalmic opticians. It opens with a chapter on anatomy and physiology and then discusses factors affecting drug absorption. Cycloplegics, mydriatics, miotics, local anaesthetics, staining agents, antimicrobial agents, solutions used in contact lens work, and anti-inflammatory compounds all have chapters of their own. The ocular effects of drugs used systemically are discussed. There is a chapter on first aid and emergency measures used by ophthalmic opticians. The final 2 sections are on formulation of eye preparations and the legal aspects of sale and supply of drugs. The physiology of neurohumoural transmission and the receptor theory of drug action is particularly well described, and indeed there is much to interest the practising ophthalmologist in this relatively short textbook of 126 pages.

S. J. H. MILLER