Book reviews

Erkrankungen der ableitenden Tränenwege und ihre Behandlung. Ed. HOLGER BUSSE and FRITZ HOLLWICH. Pp. 178. DM44. Ferdinand Enke Verlag: Stuttgart. 1978.

Moderne Probleme der Erkrankungen der Lider und des Tränenapparates. Ed GERD MEYER-SCHWICKERATH and KLAUSE ULLERICH. Pp. 265. DM55. Ferdinand Enke Verlag: Stuttgart. 1978.

These 2 volumes in the popular series Modern Problems of Diseases of the Lids and Lacrimal Apparatus should be read in conjunction. The first volume discusses diseases of the lacrimal system and their management. The anatomy, physiology, and pathology of the lacrimal passages are described in detail and the surgical and medical management of these disorders reviewed for postgraduate students. The book is well illustrated with diagrams and photographs and provides a valuable manual for those embarking on lacrimal surgery.

The companion volume provides 16 articles on a variety of subjects related to problems in the lids and lacrimal passages. They cover surgical and medical topics and are well illustrated. Each paper has a short English summary. Contributions include articles on plastic reconstruction of the lids, ptosis and its management, lid tumours, and problems of tear production and drainage. The postgraduate student and equally the lacrimal surgeon will find this a useful and interesting volume.

T. J. FFYTCH

Neuro-Ophthalmology Update. By J. LAWTON-SMITH. Pp. 396. £37.75. Abacus Press: Tunbridge Wells. 1978.

This text of 369 pages from 51 contributors is liberally illustrated and well indexed. It is concerned with problems which may arise in the consulting room of any practising neuro-ophthalmologist. After an opening chapter by the editor consisting of 35 clinical aphorisms culled from a lifetime of concentrated study there follows 2 chapters on pathological lid retraction, 4 on pupil anomalies, 2 on sixth nerve syndromes, 9 on syndromes of the optic nerve, 2 on orbital disease, 5 on chiasmal syndromes, 6 on computerised axial tomography, and 2 on downbeat nystagmus. There are single chapters on hereditary macular dystrophies, the treatment of syphilis with benzathine penicillin, eye signs in Charcot-Marie-Tooth disease, and treatment of migraine and retinal functional tests.

If a would-be purchaser would like to dip in and taste the excitement and thrill of this evolving subject, a glance at the chapter on the 'Diencephalic syndrome of emaciation in infancy and childhood' or, to take another at random, 'The impossible meningioma syndrome', will

surely persuade him that a place must be found for this text on a bookshelf close to his place of work, handy for ready reference.

It would be true to say that the introduction of CAT, ultrasonography, fluorescein angiography, and the recording of visual evoked and other responses has revolutionised the process of diagnosis in neuro-ophthalmology so much so that an older culture may be in danger of dying. This technical leap ahead is comparable to that of radar from astral navigation. It is interesting, however, to note that the editor believes field testing in some chiasmal syndromes is a more revealing and reliable investigation than scanning.

The main problem of neuro-ophthalmological diagnosis in the rich, developed countries is that of selection. Otherwise every patient with a headache is in danger of being submitted at great expense to a battery of tests and therapy administered according to the 'read-out'. The main problem in the poor and developing countries is likely to remain the lack of facilities required to make an accurate and early diagnosis. As half the population of our planet can barely afford a plain x-ray, far less a CAT scan, action to alleviate this state of affairs, political rather than medical, might well prove (*pace* the editor's foreword) as propitious as prayer to an omnipresent god.

S. J. H. MILLER

Notes

Paediatric ophthalmology

The second congress of the International Society of Paediatric Ophthalmology will be held in Parma, Italy, on 20-24 June 1979. The programme includes topics on environment and the eye, non-chromosomal malformations, inherited errors of metabolism, albinism, phakomatoses, and free communications. For programme correspondence contact Dr Heskel M. Haddad, 1200 Fifth Avenue, New York, New York 10029, USA, or Professor Mario Maione, Department of Ophthalmology, University of Parma, Parma 43100, Italy. For travel arrangements contact Garber Travel, 1406 Beacon Street, Brookline, Massachusetts 02146, USA.

Photobiology

The VIII International Congress on Photobiology will be held in Strasbourg, France, on 20-25 June 1980. Subjects to be discussed include: Spectroscopy, photochemistry of proteins and nucleic acid-protein complexes, photochemistry of nucleic acids, repair of photochemical lesions, radiation-induced carcinogenesis, genetic aspects, photosensitisation, phototherapy, effects of non-ionising radiations on retina and on transparent media of eye. Further details from Dr M. Charlier, Centre de Biophysique Moléculaire, 1A Avenue de la Recherche Scientifique, 45045 Orleans Cedex, France.