

Book reviews

Advances in Ophthalmology. Vol. 40. Eds. M. J. ROPER-HALL, H. SAUTTER, E. B. STREIFF. Pp. 224. DM188. Karger: Basle, Switzerland. 1980.

This volume gives information on three diverse subjects, namely, the causes of blindness throughout the world; the proteins in the aqueous humour; and the standardization of visual field testing. The first report emphasises once again the problem of even finding a uniform definition of blindness and the difficulties of obtaining reliable statistics. There are, however, some useful tables which give a guide to the widely differing problems in many countries. The second report is a very useful general account of how proteins may enter the anterior chamber and the extensive work of analysis on which the author has been engaged for many years. It ends with an extensive bibliography and is thus a most useful account of this subject. The final report was commissioned by the National Research Council of America. It gives an account of the basic factors in visual field testing. It does not make any particularly new recommendations but is useful in that it summarises the well known facts about field testing which have been contributed by others as well as American authors.

R. F. FISHER

Textbook and Atlas of Slit Lamp Microscopy of the Living Eye. Vol. 2. By Alfred Vogt. Pp. 422. DM600. Wayenborgh: Bonn, W. Germany. 1979.

This is an English translation of volume 2 of the incomparable textbook and atlas published by Vogt in 1931. The excellence of the original colour drawings and black-and-white photographic illustrations has been fully maintained. For anyone wanting an excellent translation of the foundations of slit-lamp examination of the lens and zonule this volume is obligatory. Since the subject matter consists mainly of descriptive observations, the volume is by no means dated and is thus a worthwhile book of reference. I am afraid, however, its high price will prevent its purchase by many ophthalmologists.

R. F. FISHER

Vitreoretinal Disease. By PETER H. MORSE. Pp. 625. £51.00. YB Medical Publishers: London. 1979.

This book details the experience and interests of the director of the Retinal Service in the Pritzker School of Medicine in the University of Chicago. The title is misleading, as more than half the book is concerned with retinal conditions which have no vitreous implications whether by causation or complication. Although most 'medical' retinal conditions are adequately documented, this aspect of the book compares unfavourably with a recent alternative text on retinal and choroidal diseases from the Pritzker School.

Readers expecting a truly vitreoretinal manual will find the sections on vitreous surgery and previtrectomy assessment disappointingly short, with only half a page of

text devoted to ultrasound examination, and virtually no discussion of multiple-incision/common-gauge surgery, which is the current vogue. The most valuable part of the book is that third which is devoted to the assessment and treatment of rhegmatogenous retinal detachment. The author describes in great detail the preoperative, operative, and postoperative management of patients, discussing both the 'buried implant plus diathermy' as well as the 'explant plus cryotherapy' methods of treatment. However, the almost missionary zeal with which measures to improve patients' comfort and wellbeing are advocated sometimes blurs the issues; for example, the chapter on 'scleral buckling techniques' begins with 2 paragraphs on straps—not of the encircling silicone variety but the heavy leather type securing the patient to the theatre trolley or operating table. Technical instructions also tend to be unduly fastidious—'the foot-pedal (for cryotherapy) should be placed near the surgeon's foot'—while the diagram of treatment of a retinal tear implies that double freezing of the bare pigment epithelium within the break is desirable. The description of giant breaks also compounds the continuing confusion about this topic among retinal surgeons.

Overall, the book is well written but is only modestly illustrated and is somewhat lacking in direction. The section on 'macular pucker', for example, is relegated to a 'miscellaneous conditions' chapter near the end of the book (nestling uncomfortably between 'photoreceptor degeneration and cancer' and 'retinal haemorrhage in the newborn') and includes no mention of surgical treatment. Each chapter ends with a bibliography, whose usefulness is limited by the virtual exclusion of non-American publications and the absence of any referencing system within the text itself. DAVID MCLEOD

Vitrectomy. 2nd edn. By ROBERT MACHEMER and THOMAS M. AABERG. Pp. 262. \$23.50. Grune and Stratton: New York. 1979.

In the second edition of this book Dr Machemer has been joined by Dr Aaberg. The authors state that the book is not intended to be an encyclopaedia on vitrectomy but a presentation of the personal experience of the 2 authors. The fact that this edition is considerably larger than the first reflects the rapid advances that have been made in this field of microsurgery during the last few years. The indications and contraindications for vitrectomy are continually changing. Disorders such as diabetic retinopathy with severe rubeosis iridis and retinal detachments complicated by severe periretinal proliferation, which were previously considered inoperable, may now benefit from surgery.

Despite the addition of much new material and an expansion of the bibliography, this edition has a logical sequence and is easy to read. The first few chapters deal with the selection of patients, the rationale for treatment, and preparation of instruments. The emphasis of the book is very much on surgical techniques. All the new techniques such as the removal of epiretinal membranes, fluid-gas exchange, and transvitreal cryotherapy and drainage of subretinal fluid are described in detail and

amply illustrated. For those who do not wish to become involved with the complicated and delicate manoeuvres within the vitreous cavity there is an excellent section on the use of vitrectomy instruments in anterior segment disorders. Of particular interest is the treatment of pupillary membranes and the management of neovascular glaucoma by a filtration procedure over the pars plana.

This is one of the best of many books on vitrectomy that have recently appeared on the market and is strongly recommended.

J. J. KANSKI

Real Time Ophthalmic Ultrasonography. By S. N. HASSANI. Pp. 214. DM69. Springer-Verlag: Berlin. 1978.

This book describes contact B-scanning of the eye and orbit with the Bronson Turner B-scan unit and is written by 2 radiologists. One of the authors' presumed intentions was to orientate the nonophthalmically trained examiner to ocular anatomy, pathology, and therapy. Unfortunately much of the book reads like a student's hectic jottings from some out-of-date ophthalmic text, and ophthalmologists will wince at the wealth of confusing statements, inaccuracies, and frank errors. A few examples might be cited: the cross-sectional diagram of the eye implies that the vitreous is richly vascularised; another diagram labels the posterior lens capsule 'anterior capsule' and presents a novel interpretation of the site and configuration of the ciliary body; there is no description of the ora serrata, which, to judge by the diagrams, enjoys an enormously diverse anatomical position; the optic nerve is described as having an S-shaped curve. Furthermore, little priority is given to those aspects of ophthalmology likely to be encountered in an ultrasonic department. In the section on systemic hypertension, for example, the retinopathy is described but there is no mention of the commonest ultrasonic presentation, that is, vitreous haemorrhage and incomplete posterior vitreous detachment arising from retinal branch vein occlusion complicated by neovascularisation. This curious disorientation is most evident in the glossary of ophthalmic terms at the end of the book. For some reason, 'anomalous retinal correspondence', 'cyanosis retinae', 'snow blindness', and 'Hallerman-Streiff syndrome' are considered worthy of definition, but there is no mention (anywhere) of the 'vitreous base', 'giant retinal tear', or 'massive periretinal proliferation'.

There are approximately 400 B-scan photographs covering a wide range of pathology. Again, there is a curious imbalance in emphasis—there is no clear illustration of a 'collar stud' choroidal melanoma, a diabetic traction detachment, or an optic nerve tumour. Yet there are dozens of pictures of normal extraocular muscles and cataractous lenses, 9 examples of asteroid hyalosis, and, unbelievably, 5 pictures of so-called 'reflection artefacts' arising from faulty camera technique. The labelling of B-scans also leaves much to be desired—sheets of echoes in the posterior vitreous are labelled 'macular oedema', 'retinitis', and 'diabetic retinopathy', and many archetypical ultrasonic findings are confused—for example, cyclitic membrane versus posterior hyaloid

membrane and 'organised' haemorrhage versus retrohyaloid debris. Occasionally the figure legends indicate one disorder and the labelling on the B-scan indicates another.

Even the introductory chapter on the 'Principles of ultrasonography' contains many incorrect statements, highly confusing diagrams, and spelling mistakes.

In the foreword close co-operation between the ophthalmologist and the ultrasonographer/radiologist is recommended. Sadly, this book demonstrates many of the pitfalls which arise when such liaison is lacking. In view of the recent flurry of books on ophthalmic ultrasound, it is difficult to imagine any ophthalmologist, radiologist, or ultrasonographer who might benefit from reading this one.

M. RESTORI
D. MCLEOD

A Guide to Medical Photography. Ed. PETER HANSELL. Pp. 163. £17.95. MTP Press: Lancaster. 1979.

Peter Hansell has edited the work of eight other authors from various countries and contributed 1 chapter himself to complete this attractive book on medical photography, a subject about which there are very few other textbooks. It is a nicely produced and very well illustrated volume, which will serve to show the ophthalmologist what is possible in medical photography and so may help him in preparing material for teaching and publication.

There is just 1 chapter on ophthalmic photography, by Phillip Hendrickson of Alabama, USA, in which he has to encompass the entire scope of his subject in just 10 pages. An ophthalmologist wishing to apply photography to clinical or research purposes, such as in the fields of fluorescein angiography and slit-image photography, will not find sufficient information to allow him to become proficient in this work. But a reasonable number of references are provided for those willing to progress beyond the scope of this book.

NICHOLAS PHELPS BROWN

A Colour Atlas of Ocular Tumours. By MICHAEL A. BEDFORD. Pp. 78. £12.00. Wolfe Medical Publications: London. 1979.

This is an excellent book which provides comprehensive photographic recordings with accompanying short factual accounts of the various benign and malignant tumours which involve the skin of the eyelids, the conjunctiva, the uvea (iris, ciliary body, and choroid), and the retina.

In any medical textbook the question of illustrations is a vexed one because it involves inevitably a compromise between providing a comprehensive photographic account of the various diseases, which frequently must be in colour to be effective, and providing a book which is economically viable. Sometimes illustrations may be reduced to a minimum, so that a factual text is achieved at a reasonable cost. As the late Sir Stewart Duke-Elder said, 'Live pictures should be available in the clinic'. This is appropriate when the book is confined largely to