Book reviews

Radiant Energy and the Eye. Ed. SIDNEY LERMAN. Pp. 321. \$45.00. Macmillan Publishing Company: New York. 1980.

The author of this unusual book holds posts as both professor of ophthalmology and adjunct professor of chemistry, and he combines his 2 fields of interest here. He discusses current knowledge of physical and biological chemistry as it relates to the potential hazards of radiant energy on the eye.

After discussion of the basic principles of the electromagnetic spectrum, absorption of radiant energy, and classical and quantum mechanics, he describes the functions and structure of the eye. Subsequent chapters are devoted to biological and chemical effects on the eye of different types of radiation—ultraviolet, infrared, microwave, radiofrequency, and ionising radiation. A full account of damage which may be produced by laser irradiation is included. Throughout the book detailed diagrams and many clear photographs illustrate the structure and function of normal and damaged tissues, although most readers will not profit from the many biochemical pathways given in full. A printing error has unfortunately led to the omission of 8 pages from the chapter on ultraviolet irradiation (chapter 3).

This book is clearly written and easy to follow, but the wealth of detail and its wide scope may make much of it irrelevant to most clinicians. In spite of its comprehensiveness it is difficult to see for what readership it is intended. It will find a place as a reference work for ophthalmologists and exceptionally for radiotherapists or radiobiologists but may be most useful for research workers in similar fields requiring a detailed survey of previous experimental data and publications.

A. BARRETT

Congenital and Acquired Colour Vision Defects. Eds. JOEL POKORNY, VIVIANNE C. SMITH, GUY VERRIEST, A. J. L. G. PINCKERS. Pp. 409. £22.20. Academic Press: London. 1980.

This highly informative book deserves great praise and recommendation: praise because it presents a thoroughgoing, if at times a little uncritical, review of the elements underlying the acquisition of colour data useful for diagnostic purposes; recommendation because it is readable. It is well documented and illustrated, and the multiauthor presentation seems less of a drawback than usual.

It is too much to expect that, even where it deals with matters of fact rather than opinion, the text should be faultless, but clinicians and research workers alike have only themselves to blame if they fail to consult original sources in matters they consider important. They are assisted in this with the large bibliography which elaborates the topics the book covers. These include stimulus specification and the basic physiology and pathology of colour vision together with a description of some clinical techniques. Attention is paid also to acquired defects and their consequences for the patient. At the same time

it is a pity if former follies are perpetuated. For instance, if Pickford had ever heard of macular pigmentation, his anomaloscope, let alone the Pickford-Lakowski equation, would hardly ever have come into being. No wonder its usefulness is circumscribed.

Finally, this excellent tome illustrates the value of a multidisciplinary approach to Ophthalmology. It is a seed bed of ideas which will, one trusts, be exploited by clinical and scientific workers alike. If some of the cobwebs over some of the topics can be swept away, even the patient may benefit—if only by having his time saved.

ROBERT WEALE

Repair and Reconstruction in the Orbital Region. By J. C. MUSTARDE. Pp. 400. £35.00. Churchill Livingstone: Edinburgh. 1980.

The first edition of this book became essential reading for anybody interested in reconstruction in the orbital region. Since it was written there have been many new developments in the field, and this new edition has been eagerly awaited by ophthalmic and plastic surgeons. They will not be disappointed. The author has retained his previous style and sets out the techniques which he personally finds most useful. Although alternatives are mentioned, the reader is left in no doubt which methods the author favours. They are set out in a very clear and logical manner, with excellent line diagrams and photographs.

The book covers all aspects of reconstructive surgery from basic techniques, such as how to insert a needle, to the more complex repairs. Some of them have been modified in this new edition, such as the author's lower lid rotation flap for repairing an upper lid defect. Mention is also made of the recent advances in craniofacial surgery and the treatment of hypertelorism. However, primarily the author attempts to keep the surgical principles and techniques simple and logical, and the appendix of instruments which he has designed further supports this aim.

As its title suggests, the book concentrates on repair and reconstruction in the orbital region. It does not devote much space to more ophthalmological problems such as entropion and trichiasis, and it does not mention recent advances in management such as cryotherapy. However, it is not intended specifically for ophthalmologists but rather for everybody dealing with reconstruction in the orbital region. In this field the author has an unparalleled experience, which makes this new edition an essential book for anybody involved in such surgery.

J. R. O. COLLIN

Computer-Assisted Eye Examination. Ed. ELWIN MARG. Pp. 146. \$10.00. San Francisco Press: San Francisco, California. 1980.

There really should not be any need for this excellent book. We are rational creatures, whose thinking is guided by logic, by operational economy, with an eye to efficiency and to efficacy. We do not allow any of our actions to be perturbed by ill considered or illogical elements, and consequently are completely au fait with computer principles in general and their logic as applied

to ophthalmology in particular. There is, however, no harm in making assurance doubly sure. This is what this book sets out to do. It throws in a history of examination practice for good measure, and shows how a patient's answers (he does not have to know any algorithm or even BASIC) can be fed to the monsters. Both subjective and objective techniques are considered. The reader's understanding is much helped by numerous plates and line illustrations. Several of the latter seem to serve as sight tests. But the documentation is good; there is both an author and a subject index. It is, however, not clear to at least one reader, in spite of a revealing section on the economics of the matter, how even a group practice will tackle an initial overall investment of more than £140 000. Only the furniture component (£4170) is not computer-linked, so that we really are dealing with an investment problem of some magnitude. The book would be appreciated even more if it gave an indication of the probable number of such complexes in clinical use.

ROBERT WEALE

1979 Year Book of Ophthalmology. Ed. W. F. HUGHES. Pp. 366. £21.25. YB Medical Publishers: London. 1980.

This book includes a short review on motility by David Mittelman, on contact lenses by Jack Hartstein, on herpes conjunctivitis by Fred M. Wilson, on the corneal endothelium by Donald J. Doughman, on human leucocyte antigens in glaucoma by Robert A. Moses, on surgery of the lens by Robert C. Drews, on tuberculous and syphilitic uveitis by T. F. Schlaegel Jr., on massive periretinal proliferation by R. Joseph Olk and Chang Bok Lee, on transient unilateral visual loss by Michael A. Rosenberg, on regulations of the Food and Drug Administration by Arnauld F. Scafidi and Philip P. Ellis, and on computers in ophthalmology by Albert M. Potts, and there is a final section wherein there are 49 questions to form a searching test for the reader.

As is usual the year's literature is concisely summarised, and interest is continually stimulated by parenthetical remarks and observations by the editor William F. Hughes stringing together isolated observations and catalysing them to form a unified philosophical compendium.

STEPHEN MILLER

Notes

Oculoplastic surgery

A semiannual oculoplastic surgical course will be held at Tarrytown, New York, sponsored by the New York Medical College, on 13–16 May 1981. Fee \$650. Details from Ms P. Tamkin, c/o Dr P. Guibor, 630 Park Avenue, New York, NY 10021, USA.

European Ophthalmic Pathology Society

The next meeting of the European Ophthalmic Pathology Society will be held in Geneva, Switzerland, on 24–28 May 1981 and will be a combined meeting with the

Verhoeff Society. Professor J. Babel, of Switzerland, will act as organising secretary.

OSSA meeting

The next meeting of the Ophthalmological Society of South Africa will be held on 2–5 June 1981 at Sun City. Details from the Secretary, 7th Floor, Tower Hill, Kotze Street, Hillbrow, Johannesburg 2198, South Africa.

Lacrimal course

The seventh annual lacrimal course will be held at Park City, Utah, USA, on 3–6 June 1981, sponsored by the University of Utah Department of Ophthalmology, St Francis Hospital, and the Boston Eye Research Institute. Details from Boston Eye Research Institute, 20 Hope Avenue, Suite 106, Waltham, Massachusetts 02154, USA.

Retinal disorders

The Retinal Vascular Center of the Wilmer Institute will celebrate its 11th anniversary with a course entitled 'Diagnosis and management of retinal vascular and macular disorders' at Big Sky, Montana, on 12–17 July 1981. Details from Big Sky Course Co-ordinator, 17 Turner, 720 Rutland Avenue, Baltimore, MD 21205, USA.

Herpesvirus

An international symposium on 'Herpesvirus: clinical, pharmacological, and basic aspects' will be held in Tokushima City, Japan, on 27–30 July 1981. This is one of the satellite symposia approved by the 8th International Congress of Pharmacology. Further details from Dr H. Shiota, Department of Ophthalmology, Tokushima University, Kuramoto-cho, Tokushima City 770, Japan.

Ophthalmic genetics

On 20–23 September 1981 an international symposium on ophthalmic genetics will take place in Jerusalem, Israel. The symposium is sponsored by the National Foundation-March of Dimes, International Society for Genetic Eye Diseases, Israel Ophthalmological Society, Israel Academy of Sciences, and the Israel-American Ophthalmological Society. Major subjects include retinitis pigmentosa, lipid and oligosaccharide retina storage diseases, gyrate atrophy of retina, retinoblastoma, corneal dystrophies, phakomatosis, connective tissue diseases and the eye. Information from Donald Bergsma MD, Department of Ophthalmology, School of Medicine, University of Kentucky, Lexington, Kentucky, USA.

Ocular electrodiagnosis

The Institute of Ophthalmology and the Electrodiagnostic Department, Moorfields Eye Hospital, London, will present a 5-day intensive course in ocular electrodiagnosis on 15–19 June 1981. Fee: £250. Further information from Professor G. B. Arden, c/o The Dean's Department, Institute of Ophthalmology, Cayton Street, London EC1V 9AT. Applications, which are strictly limited, should be received before 1 April 1981.