Book reviews

Twenty-Five Years of International Ophthalmology (1957-1982). By JULES FRANÇOIS. Pp. 104. US\$10.00. Professor Jules François, Oogheekundige Kliniek, AZ-De Pintelaan 185, B-9000 Gent, Belgium. 1982.

In the first part of this book there is a brief description of the international congresses which have been held since 1957, and at the end of the chapter the value and disadvantages of international congresses are summarised. In the following part the membership of the International Council over the period under review is given. This is followed by a mention of the activities of the council and its associated committees and subcommittees. Part IV relates to the Gonin medal. A short biography of the medallists is given. The last part of the book deals with the Statutes of the International Council of Ophthalmology, of the International Federation of Ophthalmological Societies, and of the International Congresses of Ophthalmology. The regulations of the two awards—the Gonin medal and the International Duke-Elder medal—conclude this small volume. This is a useful reference work for anyone wishing to know the details of the activities of the International Council and its associated bodies.

JAMES R. HUDSON

Documenta Ophthalmologica Proceedings Series 33. Colour Vision Deficiencies VI. Proceedings of the International Symposium, Berlin. 1981. Ed. G. VERRIEST. Pp. 521. Dfl. 235.00. W. Junk: The Hague. 1982.

The Good and the Great generously rub shoulders with the rest in this agglomerate of papers on vision, colour vision, and colour vision defects. Some of the information, for example, on tritanopia, is illuminating, some, like that on tricyclic psychopharmaca and colour vision, could be much compacted. If one turns over the pages and the subconscious whispers 'déjà-vu,'—for example, in connection with responses to short duration red-green mixtures—'déjà-oublié' also matters, as when outdated 1931 data are used to determine tritanopic characteristics. However, the pearls are there, and for their sake it is worth digging through the book.

ROBERT WEALE

Societas Ergophthalmologica Internationalis. 5th Symposium, Bordeaux 1974, 6th Symposium, Hamburg 1976, 7th Symposium, Nagoya 1978. Ed. H.-J. MERTÉ. Pp. 757. DM.298. S. Karger: Munich. 1982.

The proceedings of the last 3 biennial symposia of the International Society of Ergophthalmology have been published as a single volume. The papers from the Nagoya symposium are written in English, but in view of the international membership of the Society it is a pity that English summaries are not provided by Bordeaux and Hamburg.

The 5th Symposium, held at Bordeaux, identifies visual problems in transport and those arising from the use of visual display units. The assessment of compensation for attributable injury is discussed and includes an attempt to standardise compensation for different types of visual field defect.

The 6th Symposium, held at Hamburg, studies aspects of occupational injury and disease and the rehabilitation of workers rendered visually unfit. This symposium includes an interesting paper which defines ergophthalmology and its relationships with clinical ophthalmology and occupational medicine.

The 7th Symposium, held at Nagoya, deals with the visual effects of environmental pollution and studies injuries arising from road traffic accidents. It includes a paper from Germany which relates the fall in the number of perforating wounds of the eye over a 5-year period to the effects of seat belt legislation over the same period.

A. J. RINTOUL

Optokinetics. By HARRY H. MARK. Pp. 198. No price given. John J. Corbett Press: Woodbridge, Connecticut. 1982.

The author presents for the interested reader a meander through the various concepts attributed to the movement of light. Each theory concerning the behaviour of light is dealt with in a historical and philosophical sense. The book is not a textbook but a journey with the author to the library where he has browsed with leisure among the original papers and texts. For example, the ideology regarding space may span from Euclid as described by Daye in 1570 to Mach and his attitude to the analysis of visual sensation in 1959. This book, therefore, is one that can be picked up at any time and read in small parts. There is always enough to make the optically versed reader argue with the author, since many of the ideas expressed are not necessarily conventionally accepted. The ophthalmologist who is in any way interested in his Alma Mater will find the book refreshing and at times amusing (in an esoteric way). While the title of the book may be forbidding, the contents on the contrary are 'elementary, my dear reader!' MONTAGUE RUBEN

Optometric Instrumentation. By DAVID B. HENSON. Pp. 244. £20.00. Butterworths: Sevenoaks, Kent. 1983.

This book is aptly titled. It deals with those aspects of ophthalmic assessment which most often concern optometrists (ophthalmic opticians). The ophthalmologist, who is just as committed to ocular and visual measurement, should not be discouraged.

In 12 concise chapters Dr Henson covers the subjects of ophthalmoscopes, retinoscopes, tonometers, field testing equipment, keratometers, slit-lamps, ophthalmic photography, optometers, trial case lenses and refracting units, visual acuity instrumentation, lens checking equipment, and screeners. The most attractive feature of the text is its wealth of excellent diagrams, drawn by the author himself.

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Many of these show light pathways in pictorial perspective view and are extremely clear and helpful.

When describing individual instruments the author does not avoid the task of comparison, and he carries it out fairly. This is valuable in areas such as field testing equipment, keratometers and optometers, where large numbers of different instruments are available. This work has few weak points. It was not apparent in the chapter on ophthalmoscopes that most indirect instruments are binocular. The section on photography of the corneal endothelium should be rewritten. Not all aspects of ocular and visual measurement are covered—for example, there is no mention of electrodiagnosis or of orthoptics—but in this the author remains true to his title. Useful and visually appealing, this book deserves to be read by optometrists and ophthalmologists alike.

ROGER J. BUCKLEY

Pocket Atlas of Ophthalmology. By FRITZ HOLLWICH. Pp. 182. £13.25. Year Book Medical Publishers: London. 1981.

The purpose of this small atlas is to provide the non-ophthalmologist with a quick diagnostic guide to common eye disorders. Each of the 19 chapters starts with a synopsis of its contents and a brief description of anatomy.

Although the vast majority of the 365 colour illustrations are of excellent quality, the same cannot be said of the text. The description of diabetic retinopathy is out of date and confusing. The non-ophthalmologist may be disappointed to find examples of extremely rare disorders such as 'butterfly dystrophy' and 'Stargardt's disease' but no illustrations of proliferative diabetic retinopathy or intraocular lens implants. Although various outdated operations for chronic glaucoma are shown, there is no mention of trabeculectomy or laser trabeculoplasty.

The non-ophthalmologist will probably find this atlas confusing, as there is little to guide him to the relative frequency and importance of the various disorders. However, the ophthalmologist in training will find most of the illustrations extremely useful.

J. J. KANSKI

Aging and Human Visual Function. Eds. ROBERT SEKULER, DONALD KLINE, KEY DISMUKES. Pp. 350. £41.00. Alan R. Liss: New York. 1982.

Despite the plethora of symposia issued in the last few years and the fact that most publishers seem to think a clever or catchy title will sell any collection of badly written and unrelated papers this volume is a gem. Careful editing and a logical theme together with an equally careful selection of expert authors have resulted in an extremely useful reference source for both the vision scientist and the ophthalmic clinician. The book is also of a rare kind in that it is extremely readable, with just enough in each chapter to stimulate the initiate into pursuing the abundant references.

The book explores the aging visual system and examines the hinterland between what is normally termed aging processes and what is usually referred to as senile pathology. In doing this it breaks the subject down into 5 key areas:

anatomical and physiological changes; alterations in basic visual functions; changes in perception and information processing; the human impact of the aging visual system; and finally current methods of studying each of these areas. This approach of analysing the aging visual system as a whole rather than the normal approach of examining the eye tissue by tissue and ignoring the higher visual centres, or vice versa, is very refreshing and leads to some interesting conclusions. One of the most striking of these is that for vision, at least, life certainly does not begin at 40, as it seems that this is the key year for senile degenerative processes to become manifest in a surprising variety of ocular tissues.

The juxtapositioning of the basic anatomical changes with age and their physiological manifestations is particularly helpful and even more so in that the clinical implications for the pathological complications of extreme senile changes are also explained.

In all, this is a very useful book that should be dipped into if not read by all with an interest in the aging visual system. The contributors and particularly the editors should be congratulated by their peers for a job well done.

JOHN MARSHALL

Turning Points in Cataract Formation, Syndromes and Retinoblastoma. Ed. W. STRAUB. Pp. 100. SFr.94.00. S. Karger: Basel. 1983.

This slim, multiauthored volume covers 3 rare and rather diverse subjects. The first chapter investigates in detail the nature and complications of cataract-induced blindness, which occurred in 61 of 744 Nepalese leprosy patients. This is followed by a meticulous catalogue of the features of François's dyscephalic syndrome (which bears a close similarity to the Hallermann-Streiff syndrome). The book concludes with a comprehensive review article by Balmer and Gailloud on the diagnosis and treatment of retinoblastoma.

One must question the value of such a publication. Details of each subject are available in journals or other more comprehensive volumes which are subject-related. It falls short of its objective to acquaint readers with crucial new findings in clinical ophthalmology and cannot really be classed as a 'turning point.'

CLIVE MIGDAL

Augenärztliche Begutachtung im Versicherungswesen. By BERNDT GRAMBERG-DANIELSEN and LUDWIG MEWE. Pp. 112. DM 30. Ferdinand Enke Verlag: Stuttgart. 1982.

Ophthalmic practice is becoming increasingly involved with medicolegal matters, particularly in the United States and now more frequently on the Continent. This handbook acts as a guide to aid the ophthalmologist in his dealings with the law, giving definitions, statistics, and advice on the sort of ocular problems that crop up in insurance claims and disability pensions. The book is designed for use in the Federal Republic of Germany, and although many of its themes are universal much is parochial and therefore unlikely to appeal to a wider audience.

T. J. FFYTCH