Book reviews

Computerized Tomography in Neuro-Ophthalmology. By I. F. MOSELEY and M. D. SANDERS. Pp. 302. £27.50. Chapman and Hall: London. 1982.

The phenomenal advance of the technological aspects of computed tomography mean that a book such as this, published in 1982, is necessarily out of date since many of the illustrations will have been gathered over several years from the use of CT machines whose resolution would today be unacceptable. This should not put off anyone who is interested in neuro-ophthalmology from buying this book, because it is in its own right a classic which contains a distillate of the authors' unrivalled experience.

After a brief but concise introduction to the radiological background the authors give a well illustrated account of radiological anatomy, using normal CT scans to illustrate the text. This is followed by sections on orbital disease, visual loss, optic nerve disease, eye movement disorders, and a section on developmental and hereditary degenerative disorders. There is a brief chapter at the end which guides the reader through the difficult process of integrating the further investigations in patients with various symptoms.

Each chapter is enhanced by descriptions of cases that the authors have seen, many of which contain not only CT scans but also face and fundus photographs and visual fields; these are exceptionally illustrative. The authors have not, however, fallen into the trap of using their book to publish a series of rare cases but have chosen carefully cases which illustrate and enhance the text. There is a useful list of references at the end of each chapter.

The practice of neuro-ophthalmology has been profoundly changed by computed tomography and this book shows how it has been made more relevant and more exciting. A sound knowledge of CT is a prerequisite of neuro-ophthalmology in the 1980s, and this book does much to provide that knowledge.

DAVID S. I. TAYLOR

Diagnostic Techniques and Clinical Questions. Ed. W. STRAUB. Pp. 137. SFr. 115. Karger: Basel. 1982.

The spectrum of ophthalmic textbooks continues to grow, augmented at regular intervals by contributions from various European series entitled 'Modern Problems,' 'Advances,' 'Developments,' etc. The form of each volume is always similar—a small group of articles, some contemporary, some reviews, and sadly some very ancient work on subjects that are often unconnected. These commissioned articles appear in English, French, and German, often without translated summaries, the standards of content and writing vary greatly, and bargains are sometimes hard to find.

The volume under review—the sixth in the series 'Developments in Ophthalmology,' while being no exception to the general formula, happens to be a bargain by virtue of the excellence of its main article on 'specular microscopy of the corneal endothelium' by Bigar from

Zurich. This is a beautifully illustrated, well-referenced, definitive discussion on the corneal endothelium and its study by specular microscopy. The applications and shortcomings of this new technique are assessed and its role in cataract and corneal surgery evaluated. Two short articles complete this volume. Strempel writes on the value of P³² tests in malignant melanoma of the choroid. The results in a series of 20 patients are still inconclusive, and little mention is made of false positive readings that occur in choroidal lesions that are not tumours. (This article is in German without an English summary.) The final paper, by Ketelsen, Schmidt, Beckmann, and Haralambie, discusses the Kearns-Sayre syndrome—progressive external ophthalmoplegia, pigmentary degeneration of the retina, and conduction disturbances in the heart. Two cases are presented, and the clinical, morphological, and biochemical results support the hypothesis that the syndrome is caused by a primary mitochondriopathy.

With ingredients mixed so randomly it is hard to give praise to this type of series, but this particular volume can be strongly recommended for postgraduates, especially those concerned with corneal problems, by virtue of its main article.

T. J. FFYTCH

Introduction to Ophthalmology. 2nd edn. By JOHN PARR. Pp. 216. £8.95. Oxford University Press: Oxford. 1982.

The strength of this excellent book lies in the clarity of exposition. In his introduction Professor Parr makes it clear that he is writing for medical students, so he gives generous coverage to the basic sciences of ophthalmology and methods of examination. These sections, which are aided by numerous black-and-white and 2-tone illustrations, take up over half the book and could hardly be bettered. But this is at the expense of the clinical sections, which are often too sketchy. It is hoped that this imbalance will be rectified in future editions.

JOHN H. DOBREE

Visual Fields: A Basis for Efficient Investigation. By C. H. BEDWELL. Pp. 219. £16.00. Butterworth: Sevenoaks, Kent. 1982.

The busy clinician, when deciding to buy a perimeter, is faced with a bewildering display of machines from which to choose. At present over 20 perimeters are available. These perimeters may be manually operated, semiautomatic, or 'fully automatic.' They provide either kinetic or static perimetry; static perimetry may be single or multiple, profile or random dot presentation. The conditions under which perimetric examination are carried out differ from machine to machine, for the background illumination varies from 31.5 Asb to 1 Asb, testing photopic or low mesopic levels of vision. Target presentation can be by LED xenon flashlamp, fibre optics, or cathode ray tube. The bowl perimeter screen may be 1/3 or 1/2 metre from the eye.

Finally, the price may range from £1000 to tens of thousands of pounds.

Faced with this choice the clinician clearly has need for a consumer guide which analyses perimeters, identifying both the procedure and possible strengths and weaknesses for each model. This the author has set out to provide; he has succeeded handsomely in his task. He is well qualified to do this, for he has a background in visual sciences with long experience in the investigation of visual performance. With A. I. Friedmann he was responsible for the development of the Friedmann analyser.

Here he traces the development of perimeters and identifies the principles involved in their design. He describes in detail most perimeters marketed today and in so doing identifies the strengths and possible weaknesses of each. The descriptions give the clinician the information necessary to decide what type of perimeter would best suit his requirements. Any ophthalmologist thinking of buying a new perimeter, particularly one of the semiautomatic ones, should first read this book.

ROGER A. HITCHINGS

The Evil Eye: A Folklore Casebook. Ed. ALAN DUNDES. Pp. 312. US\$30.00. Garland Publishing: New York. 1981.

One of the oldest and most widespread folk beliefs is that of the evil eye, which we are told can bring misfortune, ill health, and even death to its victims. The book consists of some 20 loosely strung essays and case histories from many countries and cultures, and they show a remarkable conformity in the folklore of the malevolent glance. It has been feared since the times of the Sumerians and found throughout the lands bordering the Mediterranean, the Indo-European countries, China, and Africa.

The evil eye is a channel through which malicious powers which are thought to surround us can harm certain vulnerable people. The possessor of the 'eye' is usually female and may have an obvious ocular anomaly such as a squint, crossed eyebrows, or heterochromia of the irides; but the most dangerous of all are those who outwardly appear normal. Those at risk are babies and young children, adolescents at puberty, brides, and pregnant women. The envious, proud, and those puffed up with self-esteem are also very vulnerable.

However, counter measures can be taken. Children must never be praised for their beauty or intelligence, and should this happen they should immediately be spat on. Protection by spitting is almost universal from Egypt to the Western Isles. Praise of adults, especially fulsome and undeserved praise, must be muted, as it leads to pride and fall. The custom of veiling a bride is widespread and is to protect her from envious glances. Verbal formulae, such as the 'In shalah' (if God wills) used in everyday Arabic speech, entrust the future to the Deity and not to the efforts of man. Perfection in any form is often deliberately spoiled; the weaver may make a flaw in his design and the mason leave some little defect in his stonework.

This is an engaging and scholarly work, and there is a large bibliography. It will be of great interest to anyone with a taste for the occult.

JOHN H. DOBREE

1981 Year Book of Ophthalmology. Ed WILLIAM P. HUGHES. Pp. 379. £25.00. YB Medical Publishers: London. 1982.

This book summarises the significant literature in ophthalmology to December 1981. Each section is introduced by an expert in the particular field under consideration. For orbital problems there is now a preference for computed tomography, particularly in the assessment of endocrine orbitopathy. Ultrasonography is considered the more precise indicator of tissue type, but its use is limited to diagnosis within the bony orbit. Fine-needle aspiration biopsy with the use of cytological diagnosis has been recently popularised.

In the introduction to the section on motility there is an excellent discussion on the aetiology of Duane's syndrome, which is far from settled. In the section on refraction the approval of extended-wear contact lenses for myopia has been welcomed, and auto-refractors receive a modified welcome. The differential diagnosis of superior limbic keratoconjunctivitis and papillary keratoconjunctivitis associated with contact lenses is discussed in detail in the section on the conjunctiva. A discussion on acute disease processes with an epithelial defect producing corneal thinning and perforation forms the introduction to the chapter on the cornea and sclera.

Glaucoma is introduced by 2 pages on automatic perimeters and assessment of their value. The chapter on the lens begins with a review of the factors which have proved of importance in the successful development of intraocular lens technology. In the chapter on the uvea it is pointed out that new cases of toxoplasmosis can be detected more easily by the ELISA test than by the indirect fluorescent antibody test. In the section on the vitreous, automated vitrectomy machines are discussed in regard to traumatic eye injuries, diabetic retinopathy, and rubeosis iridis. The section on the retina is introduced by a review summarising studies on the humoral and cellular immune systems in patients with retinitis pigmentosa. In the section on medical ophthalmology adverse effects of drugs in the elderly are ventilated. The last review is on tissue culture in eye research.

The whole is a worthy successor to previous editions of the *Year Book*.

STEPHEN MILLER

Note

New Afro-Asian journal

The first number of a new quarterly journal, the *Afro-Asian Journal of Ophthalmology*, appeared on 1 June 1982. It intends to publish original articles, case reports, reviews, and news items. The editors are L. P. Agarwal, S. R. K. Malik, A. K. Gupta, and P. K. Khosla. Communications should be sent to the Managing Editor, Afro-Asian Journal of Ophthalmology 16-B/22, Dev Nagar, New Delhi-110005, India.