this reviewer is concerned) familiar country. There are frequent stops where our guide (an engaging fellow who is hugely enjoying the trip himself) gives longer or shorter dissertations on points of interest on the way. However, because of the limits imposed by a tight time schedule he cannot be expected to tell us about everything we pass by. Likewise, Professor Wheale, who is limited by the space available, cannot be expected in a small book of less than 200 pages to cover the whole field of ophthalmic physiology. He restricts himself therefore largely to areas which are advancing or which merit further thought or study.

The book is in 4 sections. In the first there is some basic information on the anatomy of the eye, and, with confidence gained, the reader is gently led on into deeper waters—subjects like accommodation, photoreceptors, electrical responses, cortical receptors, and so on. Section 2 is mainly concerned with some controversial matters such as circadian rhythms and section 3 with the development and aging of the eye. The last section, which many will find the most interesting, deals with visual perceptions, colour vision, stereoscopic vision, optical illusions, and the like.

There is a very full bibliography in which the author modestly includes only a few of his many contributions to the literature.

J. H. DOBREE

Ophthalmology. Vol. 1. Disorders of the Vitreous, Retina and Choroid. Eds. JACK J. KANSKI AND PETER H. MORSE. Pp. 274. £25.00. Butterworths: Sevenoaks, Kent. 1983.

The title and format of this first volume in a series of international medical reviews encourage the reader to believe that a serious attempt is being made to present the most up to date and accurate information on the subject. On closer inspection, however, it is apparent that little effort has been made to co-ordinate the work of the individual contributors to achieve this common goal or reach an even standard. While superlative efforts have been made by some contributors to produce well structured and thoughtful overviews of their subjects, others have done little more than reiterate personal views which do not necessarily reflect the trend of current opinion.

What have the editors contributed? Is it significant that their own contributions are among the weakest in the book, while there is little evidence of their editorial policy or influence throughout? What is a chapter on surgery of the anterior segment doing in a book on disorders of the vitreous, retina, and choroid? How can a serious work concerned with vitreoretinal disease discuss massive periretinal proliferation in 3 pages? Why is the use of silicone oil completely ignored in the section on epiretinal membranes and massive periretinal proliferation and yet given a separate chapter of its own sandwiched between 2 excellent accounts of closed intraocular microsurgery? Why do some authors include an extensive bibliography while others include few references or none at all?

A textbook should surely voice either the opinions and balanced views of a single author or present the meticulous compilation and amalgamation of the views of others arranged by an editor or editors. As the first in a series based on the latter format this volume fails to set a good example.

Forewarned is forearmed, and the selective reader will quickly find his way to the outstanding contributions, such as those on disorders of the retinal pigment epithelium and on closed intraocular microsurgery, and may cheerfully cease concentrated reading at the end of chapter 13.

P. K. LEAVER

Problems of Normal and Genetically Abnormal Retinas. Eds. R. M. CLAYTON, J. HAYWOOD, H. W. RREADING, A. WRIGHT. Pp. 388. £19.00. Academic Press: London. 1982.

These are the proceedings of a symposium held in Edinburgh in September 1981, covering the biological, structural, and functional aspects of inherited degenerative conditions of the vertebrate retina. The various papers are grouped into: cellular and molecular biology of the retina, biochemistry and neuropharmacology, animal models and human disease, and differential diagnosis. While these proceedings will be of particular interest to research workers in this field, they should also be useful to clinicians interested in this group of inherited retinal disorders.

BARRIE JAY

The Windows of Soul: Psychological Physiology of the Human Eye and Primary Glaucomas. By ROBERT KUGELMANN. Pp. 258. £16.00. Associated University Presses: London. 1983.

This refreshing and rather disconcerting book approaches the form, function, and disorders of the human body simply as being expressions of our individual experience, imagery, and mythology. It concentrates on the eye, and discusses at length the significance of glaucoma as a disorder of the soul rather than of the soma.

Established eye doctors, sedimented in their scientific lore, may be dumbfounded by this alien reappraisal, so confidently and cogently expressed; and they may well boggle at conclusions like these (which were highlighted in italics):

p. 105: 'the principal point remains: glaucoma is a metamorphosis of the body such that one sees with eyes that dream even when one is wide awake.'

p. 119: 'To constellate Medusa is the telos of glaucoma: to face her, to look through her stony eyes. The glaucopsis is Medusa's head.'

p. 137: 'At the center of such eyes, we find an imaginal transformation of light into aqueous, and of aqueous into light, the dark light of Hades.'

p. 141: 'The quickness with which closed-angle glaucoma strikes resembles the violent and sudden rape of Persephone.'

p. 206: 'we have sought the true names of the parts of the eye and of the process of glaucoma in order to bring soul from invisibility into visible presence.'

Yet they cannot fail to marvel at the scholarship and dedication of the author, and envy the ordered exuberance of his imaginative forays. How tame our own fantasies seem in contrast! But at least next time we meet a hardened eyeball we can offer a fleeting homage to Medusa and Poseidon, to the astral bodies and our Freudian surrogates, and to these wayward and hitherto unrecognised evocations of man's immortal soul.

P. D. TREVOR-ROPER