Book reviews

Der Augenarzt. Vol. 8. By KARL VELHAGEN. Pp. 460. 162 M. Georg Thieme: Leipzig. 1982.

Volume 8 of this comprehensive series of ophthalmic textbooks is a disappointment for several reasons. It is composed of 4 chapters only 2 of which are connected by a common theme, and this uneven mixture of subject matter, still favoured by literature coming from East and West Germany, has for long proved unacceptable to British readers.

The first 2 chapters are related to fundus conditions; Hollwich and Krebs discuss disorders of the optic disc, and Hollwich describes disorders of the retina. Both articles are beautifully illustrated by photographs in colour and black and white. The text is lengthy and ponderous with extensive references, although sadly there are very few recent ones. More surprising in a textbook that should be contemporary is the almost complete absence of fluorescein angiography in the portrayal of fundus disease and the lack of any firm guidelines on modern therapeutic techniques such as the use of the laser. A chapter on the diagnostic use of nuclear medicine in ophthalmology by Lommatzsch, Correns, Hallermann, and Pink discusses in detail the principles of therapy and concentrates mainly on the ^{32}P test and on the investigation of endocrine orbitopathy, but the text is more for the specialist in nuclear medicine than for the ophthalmologist. The final chapter by Velhagen discusses the relationship between ophthalmology and psychiatry, a subject very much neglected in ophthalmic training and of considerable interest.

There are other criticisms of less importance that can be levelled at this production and mainly concern the correlation between the references and the text and the lay-out of the references themselves, but they serve only to reinforce the view that this is a dinosaur of a textbook, ancient in its conception and already out of date when it was published.

T. J. FFYTCH

Congenital Anomalies of the Optic Disc. By GARY BROWN AND WILLIAM TASMAN. Pp. 289. US\$44.50. Grune and Stratton: New York. 1983.

This concise, well referenced monograph is intended to serve as an up-to-date compilation of congenital abnormalities visible at the optic disc. It makes use of recent angiographic, histopathological, and animal studies to shed new light on some old problems. It is copiously illustrated and textually to the point. The 7 sections (anatomy, embryology, vascular anomalies, excavated and colobomatous discs, size abnormalities, tumours, and other) encompass the spectrum of congenital abnormalities visible at the human optic disc. Points of especial interest include a comprehensive section on vascular anomalies, a discussion on theories behind serous retinal detachments associated with optic disc pits, and the association between morning glory discs and colobomas. As might be expected in any comprehensive text, the many associations with congenital abnormalities are fully listed. There are, for example, 69 systemic associations with retinochoroidal and/or iris colobomas. For those interested in this subject the book is a useful source of information.

ROGER A. HITCHINGS

Catalog of the Bernard Becker, M.D. Collection in Ophthalmology. 2nd edn. By CHRISTOPHER HOOLIHAN AND MARK F. WEIMER. Pp. 112. No price given. Washington School of Medicine Library: St. Louis, Missouri. 1983.

The catalogue of the Bernard Becker book collection in ophthalmology has been presented to the editor by the author and in turn placed in the library of our Institute. There are 430 entries of book titles, which include full title-page description, details of pagination, bibliographic references, and a carefully prepared annotation for each volume. The catalogue forms a mirror of the historic past and is in itself a jewel among the treasures it describes. The world of ophthalmology should be grateful to Bernard Becker for his industry and for his interest in past endeavours to solve the problems of our specialty, likewise for his generosity in his willingness to share the fruits of his hobby with like-minded colleagues. His comprehensive collection was bequeathed to the Washington University School of Medicine Library, St Louis, where it lies invitingly in quiet and elegant surroundings.

STEPHEN MILLER

Ultrasonic Tissue Characterization. Eds. J. M. THIJSEN AND D. NICHOLAS. Pp. 160. US\$34.50. Martinus Nijhoff: The Hague, Netherlands. 1982.

This book contains the proceedings of the Second European Communities Workshop on ultrasonic tissue characterisation. Although it includes some interesting work, it lacks many of the characteristics of a reasonable text; many of the papers are written in poor English, making comprehension difficult, and on occasions the typeface is illegibly small.

However, interesting papers are to be found, for example, on estimation of ultrasonic parameters of tissues such as attenuation of sound by tissues and acoustic impedances of tissues. Hopefully such parameters, being intrinsic to the tissue itself, may prove useful medically. Papers on transducer design for specific purposes are included, as are techniques for measurement of membrane thickness. Other topics considered include image analysis and enhancement, tissue motion studies, and spectral analysis of echoes. Several of the papers are reviews of ongoing work at various centres. Approximately one-quarter of the 16 papers deal specifically with ophthalmology.

The book is unlikely to appeal to most ophthalmologists but may prove worthwhile reading to those working in the field of ultrasonic tissue characterisation.

MARIE RESTORI

Documenta Ophthalmologica Proceedings Series 34. Physiological and Pathological Aspects of Eye Movements. Proceedings of a Workshop held at the Pont d'Oye Castle, Habay-la-Neuve, 1982. Eds. A. ROUCOUX AND M. CROMMELINCK. Pp. 448. Dfl.175.00. W. Junk: The Hague. 1982.

This book represents the proceedings of a Workshop held at the Pont d'Oye Castle in Belgium in March 1982. Congratulations are first necessary for the rapidity of publication, an essential ingredient for a subject moving as