

Book reviews

Computed Tomography of the Eye and Orbit. By STEVEN B. HAMMERSCHLAG, JOHN R. HESSELINK, ALFRED L. WEBER. Pp. 267. £43.65. Appleton-Century-Crofts: Connecticut. 1983.

Computerised tomography now dominates the investigation of orbital disease. Except for vascular conditions CT has virtually replaced invasive diagnostic procedures for the investigation of the orbit. Angiography and venography are seldom now necessary to delineate abnormality either within the orbit or in the adjacent anterior or middle cranial fossae. The stated aim of the authors of this textbook is to provide from their accumulated knowledge a concise text to serve as a reference for the occasional diagnostic dilemma encountered by the radiologist or ophthalmic surgeon. The chapters are introduced with a brief description of the pathology, clinical features, and the CT findings of each disease. Illustrated case histories related to the text are then appended at the end of each chapter. This is becoming a favourite format for many North American publications on head and neck radiology, but it makes the work in reality an extended atlas rather than a full textbook.

The text is accurate and concise, and there is an extensive and largely up-to-date bibliography as far as the North American literature is concerned, but, as in many textbooks from the USA, important recent European contributions are not always listed. The illustrations are generally of high standard and are well worth detailed study. However, the imaging of bone detail, particularly with regard to the demonstration of the optic canals, is of indifferent quality on the scans shown and might be improved by using a CT scanner of translate-rotate design. Chief criticism of the work concerns the omission of any detailed description of plain *x*-ray changes in orbital disease. Orbital diagnosis is now based upon a combination of plain *x*-ray changes and computerised tomography. Conventional films are important not only because the cause of unilateral exophthalmos is diagnosable in many patients, but also because they may be necessary for the correct orientation of the CT examination. Despite the fact that this book is concerned only with CT scanning, some illustrations of typical plain *x*-ray features could usefully have been included.

G. A. S. LLOYD

Ophthalmologie. 5th edn. By H. SARAUX. Pp. 220. 78F. Masson: Paris. 1982.

This compact summary of ocular diseases and of general diseases with ocular symptoms or signs has been written, as the author indicates in his preface, for the undergraduate student and the general practitioner. It is intended to provide the reader with a basic appreciation of what is important or urgent among the symptoms and signs which can be observed by a medical practitioner who has had no specialised ophthalmic training. It certainly meets this need.

Unfortunately the quality of the illustrations is somewhat variable, and a number of them are of historic rather than of contemporary interest. However, the text is clearly written,

and the book should appeal to the medical student during his undergraduate training period in ophthalmology.

JAMES R. HUDSON

External Eye: Methods of Examination. By MOGENS S. NORN. Pp. 212. \$36.00. Scriptor: Copenhagen. 1983.

This book first appeared in 1974 and ran to 199 pages. The second edition is only 13 pages longer, but the text has been reset in a more compact type and the real increase is greater.

The sections remain the same: examination by simple aids, measurement of exophthalmos, slit-lamp examination, examination after vital staining, studies of surface phenomena, measurement of corneal thickness, measurement of corneal curvature, tear function studies, mucus function studies, temperature measurement, measurement of sensitivity, conjunctivo-cytological studies, biopsy of the conjunctiva, and microbiological studies. The text is concise, clear, well illustrated, and full of practical suggestions for the observation and the investigation of the external eye.

Professor Norn corrects the erroneous description of the layers of the tear film which appeared in the first edition; he also expands the section on tear break-up time and describes a technique for slit-lamp estimation of the thickness of the oily layer of the precorneal film. The admirable account of vital stains and their uses is now even more comprehensive. The new section on specular microscopy is disappointing, the opportunity to describe the new generation of large-field instruments having been ignored. The chapter on keratometry remains sketchy, with little mention of the useful technique of photokeratoscopy, and the pachometry chapter still contains no account of either the ultrasonic or the contact specular microscopic methods of corneal thickness measurement. The bibliography, originally usefully arranged under chapter headings, is now a simple alphabetical list.

These criticisms notwithstanding, this book represents a significant improvement on an important text. For the serious observer of the external eye it is indispensable. Two copies would be ideal: one to be kept on the bookshelf and the other conveniently to hand by the slit-lamp.

R. J. BUCKLEY

Congenital Abnormalities of the Optic Nerve and Related Forebrain. By T. E. ACERS. Pp. 75. \$16.00. Lea and Febiger: Philadelphia. 1983.

The general ophthalmologist will sigh with relief at this small, concise, and well written book on congenital anomalies affecting the optic nerve. His knowledge of its embryology will be refreshed, and he will be led through the congenital anomalies of the optic disc (cups, craters, colobomas, and crescents), drusen of the disc, and various hamartomas. The systemic conditions that produce optic atrophy are also included in tabloid form. The final 20 pages are concerned with the author's main interest of hypoplasia of the optic nerve. This may be subdivided into three subgroups: (1) optic nerve hypoplasia (simplex); (2) septo-optic dysplasia; (3) septo-optic-pituitary dysplasia.

The book is easy to browse through, illustrations are generally good, and the bibliography extensive and recent