

Book reviews

Clinical Ophthalmology. By JACK J KANSKI. Pp. 340. £49.50. Butterworth: Sevenoaks, Kent. 1984.

This book is intended for the trainee ophthalmologist and covers the whole field of ophthalmology. There are 17 separate chapters; curiously the page numbers are not continuous but each chapter has its own numbering, so that 7.11 means page 11 in chapter 7.

Colour illustration throughout makes this a very valuable contribution to postgraduate textbooks. The tables, coloured diagrams, and clinical photographs are all of a very high standard, and it is a pleasure to see the publishers' careful attention to page design. Clear headings make for easy reference and location of information, which will aid examination candidates in particular.

There are a few imbalances in the depth at which particular subjects are treated. Some receive detailed and definitive description, other equally common conditions receive relatively brief treatment. However, this balance is almost impossible to achieve in a textbook as comprehensive as this one, and the author has in general done well in organising the relative importance of topics. Some attention to the index will be required for any future editions, for it often misses all the text references. Again, back to the unusual page numbering, it might aid the index to revert to the conventional page numbering. Although it is perfectly possible for readers to refer to other more detailed textbooks on particular topics, it would be helpful to have enlarged sections on special investigation techniques. For example, computerised tomography receives only a quarter page description, whereas its importance in the investigation of intracranial and orbital disease has been enormous.

All in all this is an excellent and superbly illustrated textbook, a pleasure to read, and highly recommended for trainee ophthalmologists and more senior ophthalmologists for ready reference.

JAMES L KENNERLEY BANKES

Extracapsular Cataract Extraction. By JARED M. EMERY AND DAVID J. MCINTYRE. Pp. 418. No price given. St Louis, Missouri: Mosby. 1983.

Though primarily a description of technique by the two main authors, this book includes other aspects of management such as advice given in print before surgery and the precise details of what is expected of the patient postoperatively.

The descriptions of the two methods of extracapsular extraction are set out in minute detail. Nothing is taken for granted, and no item is too small to escape inclusion. A colour atlas of the steps in the surgical procedure of cataract extraction and lens implantation consolidates the detailed discussion. In addition there are chapters on Kelman phacoemulsification, the management of postoperative complications, and statistics of visual results.

There seems little doubt that the posterior chamber implant is here to stay and it will eventually supersede the iris clip. The visual results are so rapidly acquired and are so

similar to the intact eye that the effort needed to produce uncomplicated results is well worth while. The size of this book and the obsession with minutiae are a measure of the degree of effort necessary to perform in series this 'miracle' of modern surgery. The book is a must for the practising ophthalmic surgeon who wishes to be abreast of the times.

STEPHEN MILLER

Therapeutic Systems. 2nd edn. By KLAUS HEILMAN. Pp. 148. DM28. Georg Thieme: Stuttgart, New York. 1983.

In this book the author, a professor of ophthalmology in Munich, covers the whole field of these relatively new drug delivery systems which are used in many different parts of the body. The theoretical advantages of such systems are numerous. A drug can be delivered to the target organ over a fixed duration in predetermined and constant amounts of unit time. This enables a smaller dose to be given. Side effects are therefore reduced, with improvement in drug safety. Patient compliance is also improved, and this is of especial value in conditions requiring chronic administration. These systems permit the use of agents which have a short half life or are normally too toxic; plasma drug levels are kept constant.

The chief ocular therapeutic system, the Ocusert, is described at length. This was the first such system to be used clinically. Though tried in bacterial, viral, and trachomatous conditions, the only available model is the Ocusert Pilo 20 and 40 releasing 20 µg and 40 µg/hour pilocarpine respectively. The advantages claimed are that less drug is delivered over a seven-day period than the equivalent in drops, which leads to a more constant aqueous level of drug, with a reduction of side effects such as miosis and ciliary spasm. If employed in chronic closed-angle glaucoma the depth of the anterior chamber is not reduced so much with Ocusert as drops. It is not obvious from reading this book why, after the initial enthusiasm some 10 years ago, Ocusert Pilo is not employed in any quantity in the UK, though brief mention is made of cost benefit in a chapter at the end of the book.

Other systems described include transdermal, oral, contraceptive, and the osmotic pump. The oral system (Oros) can deliver acetazolamide with, it is claimed, fewer side effects. The drug is released through a hole drilled by laser in the membrane.

This book, which will be of limited interest to ophthalmologists, gives one an insight into developments in drug administration. As stated in the foreword, apart from the manufacture of new drugs there is still a need to look at the safer use of existing agents.

S. J. CREWS

Augenheilkunde in Klinik und Praxis. Vol. 3, Part 1. By H. VON J. FRANCOIS AND F. HOLLWICH. Pp. 582. DM 486. Georg Thieme Verlag: Stuttgart. 1983.

This really is a magnificent book and it is hard to avoid superlatives. It has all the excellence of its predecessors. The volume is in effect a combination of three books with contributions from eight authors—all of them professors.