

Book reviews

Animal Models of Ocular Diseases. Eds. KHALID F TABBARA AND ROBERT M CELLO. Pp. 285. US\$39.75. Charles C Thomas: Springfield, Illinois. 1984.

Not quite a report of conference proceedings but near enough, this is the outcome of a seminar sponsored by the Alta California Eye Research Foundation, and it attracts at least one of the criticisms to which that type of compilation is prone—variability of approach. Thus some of the contributions are straightforward descriptions of experiments designed to unravel a specific problem: as such they might more easily have been submitted for publication in a scientific journal. That is not to doubt the intrinsic worth of the articles but to question their appropriateness in a book with a title that implies an emphasis on the choice and use of animal models rather than on disease entities themselves. Fortunately this type of chapter is in the minority, and for the most part the authors provide valuable overviews of the relevance of animal models in a variety of ocular disorders, whether experimentally induced or naturally occurring, to the human situation.

After a helpful introduction to the principles to be observed in selecting animals for research the book is divided into four sections. The first deals with infectious diseases, covering herpetic and chlamydial infections, a variety of bacterial disorders including leprosy, and toxoplasmosis. The second section concerns neoplastic diseases but is restricted to extraocular tumours, and it is to be regretted that there is no mention of animal models of uveal melanoma and retinoblastoma. A miscellany of disorders, chiefly metabolic, are covered in the third section, while the final part of the book describes a number of immunological conditions, with emphasis on those in which the ocular signs are part of a broader systemic process.

There is much useful information here for the investigator, and, despite some reservations, the book is one which should find a place in any centre concerned with experimental research into ocular disease.

A GARNER

Pediatric Ophthalmology Practice. 2nd edn. By EUGENE M HELVESTON AND FORREST D ELLIS. Pp. 361. No price given. Mosby: Toronto. 1984.

In the foreword to this text, by Dr Marshall M Parks, reference is made not only to Costenbader, the founder of paediatric ophthalmology in the United States, but also to Doggart, who wrote the first text on paediatric ophthalmology published in 1947, and Dr Parks points out that Helveston and Ellis's second edition of this book has many of the good points that Doggart's text had, but in particular that it is coherent. While not pretending to be a comprehensive textbook, it outlines many aspects of eye problems in childhood, and the format is sensibly kept at a practical level and illustrated liberally with photographs and line drawings. The person most likely to benefit most from this book is a resident who is about to start on a paediatric ophthalmology service, but I think it will also continue to be useful to non-ophthalmologists and non-specialist ophthalmologists alike.

DAVID TAYLOR

A Colour Atlas of The Eye and Systemic Disease. By ERNA E. KRITZINGER AND BARRY E WRIGHT. Pp. 72. £15.00. Wolfe Medical Publications: London. 1984.

This book presents in a clear and readable form the major abnormalities of the eye associated with common systemic diseases. It also provides excellent colour photographs of all the major eye signs associated with these diseases and which physicians should be able to recognise in their outpatient clinics, even though they may seldom have the opportunity to encounter such patients. Some illustrations are of extremely rare diseases, and the frequent use of eponyms gives rise to some confusion—for example, the Gronblad-Strandberg syndrome, which is apparently a synonym for pseudoxanthoma elasticum. It seems perhaps a little unnecessary to burden the reader with the names of both for the same condition.

Apart from one or two minor inaccuracies (such as that lipaemia retinalis occurs with type II hyperlipidaemia) and one or two important omissions (such as lack of any reference to malignant melanoma of the choroid) I found this an excellent summary of the major medical conditions that are associated with eye disease. It should provide excellent reading for clinicians in such specialties as rheumatology, dermatology, endocrinology, and neurology as well as be of considerable value to postgraduate students in ophthalmology and general medicine who wish to review medical eye disease.

D J GALTON

Key Facts in Ophthalmology. By GEORGE W WEINSTEIN, V K RAJU, LARRY SCHWAB, GARY T RAFLO, DAVID E SWANSON. Pp. 344. £22.00. Churchill Livingstone: Edinburgh 1984.

This book is imaginatively set out and is aimed at 'students in ophthalmology and medical practitioners.' It is divided into two main sections: I, core knowledge, and II, psychomotor skills. The text is broken down into simple numbered sentences, the contents of which vary from colloquialisms in some sections to ophthalmic terminology too involved for the uninitiated for whom the book is intended. The text is rather repetitive, and although its five authors are from the same department it lacks editorial leadership. Thus on p. 41 the reader is informed that surgical removal of 'congenital cataract may be indicated as early as age 6 months or deferred.' Fortunately on p. 312 he finds out that congenital cataract should be in fact removed within the first 6 weeks of life. The section on neuro-ophthalmology is very good, though it would have been helpful had some of the basic terms such as relative afferent pupillary defect been explained a little earlier than in the last section of the book. The illustrations consist of clear and detailed line drawings and photographs; the latter may be adequate for illustrating external disorders, but the black-and-white fundus photographs are poor. The reader's irritation is not soothed by his discovering the same example of angiod streaks turned through 180° a few chapters apart, nor by the large number of spelling mistakes.

In all, I do not think that at £22 this paperback offers good value for money, though I can see that it can be useful as a pre-examination revision book for nurses and medical students.

Z GREGOR