

Book reviews

Atlas of the Peripheral Retina. By FRANK C BELL AND WILLIAM J STENSTROM. Pp. 232. £73.50. Saunders: London. 1983.

This book is an extensive atlas combined with the relevant text to describe most of the ocular conditions affecting the retinal periphery. There are chapters on basic anatomy, peripheral retinal appearances and degenerations, retinal detachments, benign and malignant tumours, infective and inflammatory retinal diseases, retinal vascular diseases (particularly diabetic retinopathy), the phakomatoses, and medical retinal diseases.

The production is to a very high standard; pictures of the retinal paintings are fairly diagrammatic. The authors have indicated that it is their intention to prepare a book for the general ophthalmologist. One wonders whether such a book is in fact useful to such a practitioner, or whether it would have been better to include in an atlas of this type the more common disorders, affecting primarily the posterior pole of the eye, particularly those that have a profound effect on vision (e.g., the macular degenerative group). The avoidance of purely central retinal lesions makes for an odd balance in the book. For example conditions mainly affecting the central retina, but which do have some peripheral extension, are included (e.g., diabetic retinopathy and angiod streaks). I felt that the chapters dealing with peripheral retinal degeneration and basic anatomy were particularly effective and those dealing, for example, with retinal detachments less so (it was surprising to see three diagrams dealing with giant retinal tears).

This book is extremely expensive and will not find a place on the bookshelf of the general ophthalmologist, for whom it is intended. However, residents in training with access to hospital libraries will find that it will be a useful addition, as a ready means of familiarising themselves with some of the fascinating complexities of the retinal periphery.

ANTHONY CHIGNELL

Bücherei des Augenarztes. Vol. 98. Pathophysiologie des Sehens. Edited by VOLKER HERZAU. Pp. 244. DM 58.00. Stuttgart. 1984.

This volume, the 98th in the series 'Bücherei des Augenarztes,' comprises a collection of 28 papers presented at the symposium on the pathophysiology of vision held at Tübingen in May 1983. The edited version contains some of the discussion also.

There are four sections dealing with the retina and optic nerve, supragenicular pathways, clinical electrophysiology, and binocular vision. The emphasis in most of these contributions is on experimental rather than clinical ophthalmology, and the book is therefore more likely to appeal to the research worker. The articles are in German but are provided with short summaries in English. With such a varied subject matter and authorship it is hard to single out any distinctive features of this volume, but the section on the retina and optic nerve covers a number of interesting pathophysiological topics which have clinical relevance.

T J FFYTCHÉ

Bücherei des Augenarztes. Vol 99. Theorie und Praxis der modernen Schielbehandlung. Eds. GERD MEYER-SCHWICKERATH AND KLAUS ULLERICH. Pp. 315. DM 76.00. Enke: Stuttgart. 1984.

The 99th volume in the series 'Bücherei des Augenarztes' is devoted to the subject of squints and is to be warmly recommended for postgraduate reading. The editors have commissioned 24 contributions from various authors on all aspects of ocular motility, including chapters on history, anatomy, physiology, diagnosis, investigation, and therapy. These blend together very satisfactorily to form a comprehensive book on the subject.

The book is well illustrated with diagrams and black-and-white photographs, and the references are extensive. All chapters are in German, but although each is provided with a short English summary the full impact of the book can be realised only by reading the text itself. For this reason this volume is unlikely to have a wide readership among ophthalmologists who do not understand German, and this is unfortunate in view of its excellence.

Once again this popular series of ophthalmic textbooks has produced a volume of very high standard, and the editors are to be congratulated. One looks forward eagerly to the next century of contributions.

T J FFYTCHÉ

Neurology and Neurobiology. Vol. 9. Development of Visual Pathways in Mammals. Eds. JONATHAN STONE, BOGDAN DREHER, DAVID H RAPAPORT. Pp. 489. £52.00. Alan R Liss: New York. 1984.

This is a collection of 31 papers given at a symposium on visual development held in Sydney in 1983. The papers cover a wide spectrum of topics representing the current research on visual pathway development, and although many of the results are already familiar the book provides a useful summary of the field.

The first section, entitled 'Development of the retina and optic nerve,' is concerned mainly with the development of retinal topography in the ganglion cell layer. The authors come to the interesting conclusion that the development of regional specialisation depends on differential growth and transformation of cell types rather than cell death and generation. In the second section, on the development of visual connections and neuronal structure, physiological and anatomical studies are described which show broad patterns of visual projections contracting during maturation to the specific differentiated patterns in the adult. The papers also deal with plasticity where the normal differentiation and contraction is modified—for example, by an unusual pattern of visual stimulation. Studies on the normal development of the lateral geniculate nucleus provide evidence for the differential rates of maturation of relay cells and the reduction of retinal synaptic contacts which occur during development. The third section, dealing with the reorganisation of visual pathways following damage or transplantation, describes both degeneration and reorganisation, showing the plasticity of visual pathways. The results of these studies show that the degree of compensation which will occur after damage to the pathway depends on the age at which the damage has occurred. The final section of the book deals with the environmental modifica-

tion of the visual system. New examples of environmental effects are described—for example, on the postnatal growth of cells in the W cell relay of the lateral geniculate, on cortical orientation selectivity, and on ocular dominance in areas 18 and 19. Papers also examine the potential for recovery from environmental modifications, for example, by reverse occlusion of monocularly deprived animals. New work on the maturation of the rabbit and primate visual cortex is presented.

This book provides a good review of the research under way on the development of visual pathways and is most suitable for those already working in this area.

B P HAYES

Atlas of the Ocular Fundus. Third edition. By H SAUTTER, W STRAUB, R TURSS, H ROSSMANN. Pp. 188. £78.00. Pitman: London. 1984.

This is a beautifully produced book. It contains high quality colour photographs of common fundus conditions with fluorescein angiography pictures printed where relevant. The descriptions are elegant, and in some case treatment is described. Some of the nomenclature does not coincide with that used in England and America. For example, they use the term arteriosclerotic-chorioretinopathy for disciform macular degeneration. The only common fundus conditions omitted are macroaneurysms and a few less common conditions, such as presumed ocular histoplasmosis and Vogt-Koyanagi-Harada syndrome.

The only criticism I have with the treatment sections is that the authors tend towards focal treatment quite frequently for retinal new vessels, which is contrary to the British experience, where more peripheral retinal ablation is used.

This is a good atlas for any ophthalmologist and would be useful for physicians. It would be a good investment for any large medical library. The price is rather high for the individual ophthalmologist.

RONALD J MARSH

Major problems in Clinical Pediatrics. By LEONARD B NELSON. Pp. 268. £42.00. Saunders: London. 1984.

This book was written for paediatricians, general practitioners, house officers, and others concerned with the welfare of children, and it succeeds in its aims. It is laid out conventionally, discussing the various aspects of paediatric ophthalmology on a mainly anatomical scheme. There are chapters on visual development and ocular examination, which are practical, but perhaps a little high powered for the non-ophthalmologist. For instance, it seems a little much to expect the paediatrician to be interested in descriptions of slit-lamp examination or indirect ophthalmoscopy except to satisfy his curiosity. There is a chapter on the visually handicapped child which is directed towards the older child and offers little advice about early intervention.

The book is well if not always accurately referenced, and there are numerous illustrations, most of which are borrowed from two well-known textbooks. It is sad that exchange rates will put this book out of the reach of most private buyers, but it will find its way on to hospital library shelves, where it will be dipped into by many doctors who look after children.

DAVID TAYLOR

I Glaucomi Secondari. Eds. F PONTE, L SCULICA, C BISANTIS. Pp. 527. No price given. Clinica Oculistica: Messina, Italy. 1983.

This textbook on secondary glaucoma is written by the three main authors, nine collaborators, and 31 assistants, all from the Universities of Palermo and Messina. A substantial historical introduction is followed by a chapter on the definition and the classification of the secondary glaucomas which is adopted in the book. The intrinsic ocular causes are dealt with in the first chapters, pseudoexfoliation glaucoma and neovascular glaucoma receiving extended treatment. An approximately equal space is devoted to the systemic associations of secondary glaucoma. An outstanding feature of the book is its abundant bibliography, perhaps rather loaded towards the Continental and, more particularly, the Italian literature; however, the Anglo-Saxon sources, where fundamental, are adequately represented.

The material is well presented in spaciouly set out pages, and the illustrations are mostly of a high standard.

JOHN ROMANO

Notes

Medical management of ocular inflammations

A national symposium on 'Recent and controversial aspects of the medical management of ocular inflammations' will be held at Jodhpur on 16–18 November 1985. Further details from the chief organiser, Professor M R Jain, Department of Ophthalmology, Dr SN Medical College, New Teaching Hospital, Jodhpur 342 003, India. Registration fee 25.00 US dollars.

Contact lens technology

The Cullen Eye Institute, Baylor College of Medicine, will hold its 26th Annual Course in Contact Lens Technology 5–7 December 1985 at the Intercontinental Hotel in Houston, Texas. This course is open to all ophthalmologists, residents, and fellows in ophthalmology, and technicians sponsored by an ophthalmologist. It will include lectures, practical demonstrations, and student participation in 25 areas of contact lens technology. Details from Bette McAinch, Contact Lens Technology Course, Cullen Eye Institute, Baylor College of Medicine, Houston, Texas 77030, USA.

Cyclops Society

Composed of people who have lost the sight of one eye, the Cyclops Society has been formed to help those who are completely blind. To this end it would welcome contact with one-eyed people in all walks of life, and it can supply posters (A4 size) for display in the waiting rooms of hospitals and individual physicians and surgeons. Details from Mr Richard Sweet, Cyclops Society, 1 Longshaw, Hazelwood Lane, Chipstead, Surrey CR3 3QL.