

infections and gives an excellent account of their identification, with very useful colour plates to illustrate the characteristics of each organism itself. It would have helped, though, if there had been tables summarising the characteristics of different bacteria, so that, for instance, the reader could readily determine which organisms were Gram-positive and which Gram-negative.

It suffers from being orientated towards the causes of the infections, so that the clinical signs, symptoms, and management are in a secondary place. This gives a lopsided approach to the book and makes it difficult for the reader to determine the relevant diagnosis and treatment. For example, in the diagnosis of staphylococcal infection of the lids no mention is made of the differential diagnosis of squamous blepharitis and what it may be associated with, and in the description of herpes simplex stromal disease no mention is made of other causes, apart from herpes simplex, of disciform keratitis.

In discussing herpes zoster ophthalmicus the authors point out that, once steroids have been started, meticulous tapering may be necessary to avoid recurrences, but they do not mention the length of the period over which this tapering has to be done. In fact it needs to be done over at least a year to prevent a rebound recurrence. In the section on measles keratitis emphasis should have been made on how this severe keratitis is a disease of poor hygiene or debilitation, and as such is a frequent cause of blindness in deprived countries in the tropics.

There are omissions. In the treatment of seborrhoeic blepharitis no mention is made of the use of tetracycline, where it has such good effects. In the herpes zoster section no mention is made of late corneal epithelial involvement with mucoid plaques, which are often found in anaesthetic corneae, nor is there any mention of their treatment. Rather, the authors say, 'changes may vary from the mildly dry eye state to severe lid deformities and corneal thinning.'

In the assessment of yet another text book the question has to be asked whether this particular one fills a gap in our already crowded shelves. The conclusion is that it does, and so it is recommended.

JAMES I MCGILL

**Laser Therapy of the Anterior Segment: A Practical Approach.** By LOUIS SCHWARTZ, GEORGE SPAETH, GARY BROWN. Pp. 153. £47.35. Slack: New Jersey. 1984.

This is a most useful practical book covering all aspects of laser therapy of the anterior segment with the use of both continuous wave and short pulse lasers. The text is clear, well illustrated with numerous illustrations, and includes many useful references. There are chapters on gonioscopic evaluation of the anterior segment, argon and YAG iridotomy, laser trabeculoplasty, other argon applications, YAG laser capsulotomy, and division of vitreous in the anterior segment.

Minor criticisms include a somewhat didactic approach in some sections, the fact that surgeons rarely treat 360° in one session now, no mention of the Ritch lens, and patients with narrow angles prior to laser trabeculoplasty are more likely to undergo a peripheral iridotomy or peripheral iridectomy than iridoplasty. YAG laser therapy has advanced since these chapters were written. There is no mention of corneal

endothelial damage. The capsulotomy energy levels today would be regarded as being too high, and the statement that 'further retraction of the capsule after the time of capsulotomy is unusual' is not most surgeons' experience.

However, this is a most useful book and fulfils its aims to familiarise the ophthalmologist with the major uses of laser in the anterior segment.

J D JAGGER

**The Ocular Lens: Structure, Function, and Pathology.** Edited by HARRY MAISEL. Pp. 479. \$102.00. Marcel Dekker: New York. 1985.

This book gives an overall view of lens anatomy, genetics, physiology, biochemistry, and biophysics as each is successively related to the crystalline lens. Towards the end of the book special attention is given to lens structure and biochemistry with regard to the problems of cataract, while the final chapter considers the impact of lens research on patient care.

The book thus has something for everyone interested in the crystalline lens. The bibliography following each chapter is therefore, at times, somewhat limited. Nevertheless, for those wishing to get an overall picture of lens research and its implications for clinical practice at the present time, it can be highly recommended.

R F FISHER

**Rob and Smith's Operative Surgery.** 4th edn. **Ophthalmic Surgery.** Eds. THOMAS A RICE, RONALD G MICHELS, WALTER J STARK. Pp. 445. £65.00. Butterworths: Sevenoaks, Kent. 1984.

This is the ophthalmology volume of the 4th edition of *Rob and Smith's Operative Surgery*, the large series that covers the entire field of operative surgery. Although both the original and the current editors of the series are British, the contributors to this volume are almost all eminent American ophthalmologists, largely from the Wilmer Institute, each contributing a chapter or two in his own field of expertise. The editors are to be congratulated on exerting sufficiently strong an influence to make the book a coherent whole rather than a series of separate units. The chapters are all of a similarly high standard, with a clear and easily read text and excellent diagrams (with a few photographs) in black and white, which probably convey information more precisely than operative photographs. The references are full and generally appropriate (though some British authors may feel a little neglected) and the inevitable absence of the most recent information is probably beneficial. This is a book describing standard established modern ophthalmic surgery rather than developing techniques, and there is thus little to be found of procedures still under evaluation such as radial keratotomy and implants for glaucoma drainage surgery.

It is the reviewer's experience that previous editions of this book have not been widely read in Britain, and the reasons for this are not clear. This present edition is first class in every way. It can be highly recommended as a standard reference book that should be readily available to both training and trained ophthalmologists. Even to the former its moderate size should not be daunting.

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