

Book reviews

Contemporary Issues in Ophthalmology: Open-Angle Glaucoma. By GEORGE W WEINSTEIN. Pp. 275. £40.00. Churchill Livingstone: Edinburgh. 1986.

This book is a collection of 13 chapters, all from different North American authors. As is so often the case with publications from multiple authors the contributions vary considerably in quality. Some are fully referenced reviews, others more anecdotal, and in such a brief text there can only be patchy coverage of the subject. The beginner will therefore find it useful as a supplement to one of the basic texts on glaucoma.

Some of the chapters are more valuable than others, and those on diurnal variation in intraocular pressure, signs of early damage, medical treatment, and complications of glaucoma surgery are well worth reading. The chapter on low-tension glaucoma is good and is set out in a fashion to provide practical guidance for the ophthalmic house surgeon. There is a fascinating but perhaps historical chapter on cyclodialysis clefts which includes a description of various ingenious methods of closing the cleft if there is unacceptable hypotony. Chapter 12 is an excellent, compact, and up-to-date summary of laser surgery which covers the successes and limitations of the technique. It is stated, however, that there is a good response to laser trabeculoplasty in aphakic eyes, which conflicts with the opinion of nearly all other authors.

There is a degree of imbalance in the subject matter. On trabeculectomy there is very little indeed. Does this reflect an American aversion to drainage surgery or is the operation now so routine worldwide that extensive discussion is unnecessary? The need for preliminary paracentesis is emphasised, but most surgeons who perform trabeculectomy never do it, and it seems a superfluous step. The final chapter on drainage implants provides a unique background description which will be valuable for those surgeons now taking up this promising technique even if their chosen tube implant is not that used by the authors. JEFFREY L JAY

Cutaneous Abnormalities of the Eyelid and Face: An Atlas with Histopathology. By DON G GRIFFITH, STUART J SALASCHE, DONALD E CLEMONS. Pp. 367. £135.00. McGraw-Hill: Maidenhead, Berks. 1987.

This atlas illustrates just over 200 skin conditions which might confront and confuse the non-dermatologist. In mind are ophthalmologists, plastic surgeons, and optometrists. The authors—two dermatologists and an ophthalmologist with other contributors—aim at a ready reference with abundant illustrations, offering easy access to the conditions included. The care taken in the design and layout of the book has helped to achieve these aims.

After a (perhaps too brief) review of eyelid anatomy and histology the conditions described are grouped by pathology into 11 main parts with subsections. For example, Part 1 entitled, 'Multisystem processes involving the eyelid', is subdivided into dermatoses and hypersensitivity, vesicobullous diseases, systemic and metabolic diseases, connective tissue diseases, and phakomatoses. Fifty separate

diseases are described in this part. The other 10 parts range from pigmentary problems to parasitic processes, focal insults to fungal diseases. Two hundred and four conditions in all are described. The text is concise and appears on the left hand pages. The brief discussions include pathogenesis, clinical features (not confined to the skin condition), natural history, and treatment. Key features are highlighted and the histopathology is inset. On the right hand pages, always within sight of the relevant text, are the clinical illustrations, mostly of excellent quality, and the histopathology, which is in black-and-white. A supporting bibliography of references (to 1985) completes the coverage of each condition, and a useful glossary of dermatological terms is thoughtfully placed at the end of the atlas.

The text is carefully compiled and easy to read. The histopathology illustrations are of good quality, but the use of colour and the addition of marks to highlight important features would have enhanced their value to the non-pathologist. This atlas is a pleasure to read and will appeal to ophthalmologists. Its price, unfortunately, may relegate it to the library. A G TYERS

Clinical Ophthalmic Pharmacology. Eds. DAVID W LAMBERTS and DAVID E POTTER. Pp. 588. £47.50. Churchill Livingstone: Edinburgh. 1987.

This is a multi-author textbook of ophthalmic pharmacology which presents the subject in a remarkably comprehensive and up-to-date fashion. It is liberally annotated with references to original literature, which would make it an excellent jumping-off point for a specialist study in the field. In this it has no competitor, and I shall keep it for reference purposes.

Most of the chapters, divided largely into drug groups, are well constructed and easy to read, though they lack the wealth of illustration which is to be found in Havener's *Ocular Pharmacology* and which so helps to show the subject as something dynamic. But there are innumerable tables of useful information, including a remarkable 30-page appendix of data on ocular penetration of antibiotics (albeit much of it derived from studies on rabbits), as well as text which explores mechanisms of drug action in an exciting way.

It is not a book for the practising ophthalmologist or for a diploma candidate, who will need something with rather less detail, and the busy reader may be annoyed by some of the repetition. Systemic effects of timolol eyedrops, for example, are discussed three times by different authors (in chapters on antiglaucoma therapy, drugs and the autonomic nervous system, and systemic effects of topical applications), but none mentions their possible implications for the control of retinal blood flow. Some tighter editorial control might have made the whole more coherent. But it is a useful source of information and it is good value for money. Libraries serving the needs of postgraduates should buy it. S E SMITH

Ophthalmic Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery. Vols 1 and 2. By BYRON C SMITH. 1449. £189.00. Blackwell: Oxford. 1987.

This is a two-volume text comprising 17 sections and 81