Vitamin A Deficiency and its Control. Edited by J CHRISTOPHER BAUERNFEIND. Pp. 530. £74.00. Academic Press: London. 1986.

This multiauthor book is a comprehensive text dealing in detail with vitamin A, its functions, the effects of deficiency, and strategies for the control of vitamin A deficiency.

The first half of the book deals with recent scientific understanding of the biochemistry, physiology, and nutritional aspects of vitamin A and its deficiency. There is objective reviewing of important papers in the fields of the metabolism of vitamin A, relationships between vitamin A and other nutrients, the role of vitamin A in the immune system, vitamin A in pregnancy, and vitamin A and carcinogenesis. For each subject extensive references are given. The text highlights the deficiencies in our knowledge, particularly in regard to the functions of vitamin A, its role in the immune system, and the interrelationship between vitamin A, infections, and child mortality. This section will certainly be of interest and give an excellent reference text to scientists involved in work related to nutrition and particularly vitamin A.

The second and larger section of the book briefly discusses the pathogenesis and clinical aspects of vitamin A deficiency, illustrated with black-and-white photographs, before turning to a comprehensive review of strategies for the control of vitamin A deficiency. Following this are chapters on the control programmes in India, Central America, the Philippines, and Indonesia, showing the different experiences and possible ways in which vitamin A deficiency may be managed at the national level. This second section on the control of vitamin A deficiency will be of great use to those involved in policy and programme planning in the field both of vitamin A deficiency and of other nutritional deficiencies.

With many authors there is a wealth of expert knowledge but also a significant amount of repetition of information. The book is a comprehensive text which seeks to unite the laboratory vitamin A research worker with the programme field officer dealing with vitamin A deficiency in a community. This is a mighty task, and one in which I believe the editor has been largely successful, in putting together this reference text.

ALLEN FOSTER

Ophthalmology Annual 1987. Edited by ROBERT D REINECKE. Pp. 213. £69.55. Prentice-Hall: London. 1987.

This is a very workmanlike book of 206 pages with a large number of references for each section, so there is plenty of secondary reading for the interested ophthalmologist. This is the third volume of *Ophthalmology Annual* and keeps up the good work of the previous two volumes. Selection of material is a skill and the series editor has done well in achieving a balance between esoteric topics and those for a wider general readership.

An account of penetrating keratoplasty and cataract surgery in children forms the opening section. This is a good review article, suitably conservative but possibly over cautious when discussing intraocular lenses in children. The section on visual acuity and cataract surgery will interest most ophthalmologists, as after all it is the basis of much of their daily work. The section describes the various adjuncts

to assessing visual function in patients with cataracts—especially important where coexistent ocular disease is present. Equipment such as PAM (potential acuity meter), blue field endoscopy, LIP (laser interferometric acuity), VEP (visual evoked potential), and pattern VEP are described and their place in assessing cataract patients evaluated. The sections on penetrating ocular trauma and on surgical management of hyphaema concentrate mostly on vitreous surgery and surgical treatment of hyphaema respectively. The latter management of hyphaema is perhaps over elaborate. Optic neuritis is an excellent, lucid section with some welcome clinical guidelines such as that 'CT scan should not be used to diagnose optic neuritis; it is used in the evaluation of patients suspected of having optic neuritis for the purpose of helping to eliminate certain other disorders.'

The section on oblique muscle surgery summarises the current views and indication for this type of surgery. The diagrams in this section are less than clear, which is unfortunate, as clear diagrams would have helped the reader greatly. Glare disability at first glance seems an unusual inclusion in this volume, but an excellent section on this subject sets out to examine and quantitate a widely encountered physiological and pathological problem. The historical account of Holladay's experiments on glare is of particular interest, leading to the modern methods of glare testing and alleviating glare. Side effects of drugs immediately captures the interest of ophthalmologists who are constantly asked about ocular side effects. This section is very short and is based on recent documentation from the USA Registry of Drug Induced Side Effects, particularly on systemic effects of timolol, allopurinol cataracts, and chloramphenicol blood dyscrasias.

The section on the current status of refractive surgery is suitably conservative in its approach but optimistic about correcting high refractive errors, especially with epikeratophakia. This section summarises present developments satisfactorily. Cosmetic eye surgery commences with a review of the surgical anatomy and outlines the principles of eyelid surgery. Following this is a description of blepharoplasty in various conditions and age groups. A whole section on diabetic macular oedema may seem excessive, but this last section contributes a precise and careful guide to the treatment of this common condition with emphasis on diabetic control, follow-up examinations, and laser treatment.

This is an eminently readable book, and almost all of it will be of value to practising ophthalmologists whatever their special interest.

JAMES L KENNERLEY BANKES

Auge und Brille: Beiträge zur Optik des Auges und der Brille. By JOSEF REINER. Pp. 205. DM 44.00. Ferdinand Enke Verlag: Stuttgart. 1987.

This book on the eye and spectacles represents an updated revision of the 59th volume in the series of ophthalmic textbooks Bücherei des Augenarztes which has contributed so much to German ophthalmology for the past few years. It is a comprehensive manual on optics and refraction, dealing in detail with the theoretical aspects of the subject and providing useful practical advice on such topics as lens forms and materials.