

Visual Optics and Refraction: A Clinical Approach. 3rd Edn. By DAVID D MICHAELS. Pp. 564. £64.00. Blackwell: Oxford. 1985.

This is the third edition of a substantial work, and within it can be found much valuable information about the optical states of normal and abnormal eyes and how they are dealt with. But surrounding this valuable information is a great deal of matter whose relationship to the subject of refraction may be questioned. The relevance of the pathology of senile macular degeneration is doubtful, for example, and rather more space is devoted to the subject of squint and amblyopia than is perhaps appropriate. Even in purely optical matters one is surprised to find a modern text making no reference at all to the work on accommodation by Fisher.

Again, the expectations of the results of refraction are raised somewhat high by the suggested causes for failure to obtain a 20/20 result. Anisokonia is discussed without a true perspective of its present day importance, and this is reflected in the fact that nothing new is referred to on anisokonia during the last 10 years at least. There is some lack of correlation between the subject of objective and subjective refraction. It is rather as if the reader is expected to know quite a lot about the subject before tackling this work. Perhaps in the United States the way retinoscopy is recorded differs from that on this side of the Atlantic, but one is surprised by the fact that in a book on refraction there is nowhere to be seen the characteristic cross with which we record the findings of retinoscopy, and on this matter the use of the terms 'gross' and 'net' retinoscopy is unfamiliar.

On some of the newer topics the work is helpful, for example, on the available automatic refracting machines and in the section on pseudophakia and on surgery for the ametropias. From these standpoints at least the book deserves a place as a reference source.

J D ABRAMS

A Practical Guide to Cataract and Lens Implant Surgery. By R S BARTHOLOMEW. Pp. 72. £22.00. Churchill Livingstone: Edinburgh. 1987.

Here is a pleasing monograph concerned with modern extracapsular cataract extraction with the insertion of posterior chamber intraocular lenses. This must be the first book I have seen on the subject which does not attempt to be all things to all surgeons. It has specific aims of dealing with a single subject sensibly and thoroughly, and the book reaches these aims very satisfactorily. The text is straightforward and is illustrated with helpful monochrome line drawings by the author.

Such a volume can be of immense help to ophthalmologists in surgical training and to more senior colleagues faced with the prospect of having to adjust their accustomed surgical techniques to current requirements. The book details the simplicity of this form of surgery and gives careful guidance on the avoidance and the management of common difficulties.

ARTHUR D MCG STEELE

Hearing by Eye: The Psychology of Lip-Reading. Eds. BARBARA DODD AND RUTH CAMPBELL. Pp. 268. £19.95. Lawrence Erlbaum: London. 1987.

To one who is amazed by the incredible skill of lip-readers

or who admires the rare skills of a ventriloquist, this book is a must. Although it will be of greater interest to those in the audiology and allied professions, there are some parts of the book which will be worth while for the ophthalmologist as well. There is a very interesting chapter on the development of phonology in the blind child which outlines the importance of vision in learning to speak, blind children being slower in most areas.

Most of the book comprises chapters by various distinguished psychologists working in the area of speech, language, and phonology, and, while they are a most interesting and useful (according to my paediatric audiologist colleague) collection, it is not likely to be more than glanced at by ophthalmologists and related specialists.

DAVID TAYLOR

Recognizing Patterns of Ocular Childhood Diseases. By LEONARD B NELSON, GARY C BROWN, JUAN J ARENTSEN. Pp. 187. £45.60. John Wiley: Chichester. 1985.

This excellent little book is a rather novel approach to teaching paediatric ophthalmology to the new resident and, as the authors describe them 'The practicing Ophthalmologist'. Each pair of pages is linked with text on the left and photographs on the right. Subjects are treated with a broad brush, but there is a surprising amount of detail. In fact anyone who is a beginner at paediatric ophthalmology with its totally different set of pathologies could not do better than to look through this book. Useful references are given at the end of each section, and strabismus is given the 20 or so pages out of 187 that its social significance as a cause of visual handicap deserves.

Substantial areas are not covered, but that is quite understandable in a book of this type which complements the use of a larger text. It is to be warmly recommended to residents starting their paediatric ophthalmology training and others with a new interest in the subject.

DAVID TAYLOR

Peripheral Iridectomy: Surgical, Argon, YAG. By ARTHUR S M LIM. Pp. 86. US\$ 40.00. PG Publishing: Singapore. 1987.

This is a small, concise, easily read book liberally illustrated with excellent colour photographs by an author of international repute. There are chapters discussing the indications for peripheral iridectomy, techniques including ab externo, clear cornea, argon laser, and YAG iridotomy, and complications of these procedures. As of any small didactic book, it is easy to quibble about aspects of surgical technique and certain statements. Most experienced YAG iridotomists would not be so cautious about enlarging the iridotomy and would be worried about leaving some of the ones pictured so small. It is unfortunate that the pros and cons of each technique, with their incidence of complications, are not more clearly defined. However, I would have no hesitation in recommending this book for ophthalmologists in training.

J JAGGER