very interesting reading. It is the last in the series under the present editors, and hopefully their successors will continue to distill the ever increasing volume of ophthalmic literature in this efficient yet enjoyable format.

Z GREGOR


This new book is a textbook of surgical anatomy rather than a comprehensive textbook of surgery, and in this respect the title is misleading. The anatomy of the midfacial tissues is described in detail and clinical surgery is discussed within this framework. The authors are well known for their publications in ophthalmic plastic surgery and anatomy in particular.

The book is divided into five sections: osetology, nose and paranasal sinuses, lacrimal excretory system, eyelids, orbital anatomy, and surgery. Each section begins with a general subsection on clinical considerations. Specific clinical points are made in the anatomy subsections and selected operations are described. Each section has an extensive bibliography.

It is the anatomy which is of greatest value in this book. The text is readable and well researched. The illustrations are good black-and-white photographs of osteology and cadaver dissections backed by clear line drawings. The clinical and surgical parts of each section are less consistent and do not always fit comfortably within the anatomical framework of the book. This leads to a discursive style which lacks a systematic arrangement of clinical information. Acute dacryocystitis and lacrimal system tumours, for example, appear in the subsection on the lacrimal pump; the assessment of ectropion is found with central canthal repair. This scattering of clinical information means frequent reference to the index to gather a topic together.

The authors have been very selective in their choice of operations, especially in the section on the eyelids. Only transport of the eyelids and repair of the canthus of orbitocasis and (in a different subsection) of the lower eyelid retractors by a skin approach are offered for the correction of entropion. The whole of ptosis surgery is covered by anterior approach levator replacement or resection. Müller’s muscle surgery is limited to its excision in thyroid ophthalmopathy. Eyelid reconstruction is hardly mentioned. Operations which are included are, however, well described and illustrated.

This is an attractively produced book in hardback which will appeal mainly as a text on surgical anatomy. Those looking for a systematic, comprehensive coverage of practical ophthalmic plastic surgery will be disappointed.

A G TYERS


This is a multiauthor textbook dealing entirely with the eye in the first year of life. It succeeds well in its aim to concentrate on the eye in infancy. The first section, on general considerations in the newborn eye, considers anatomy and physiology of the eye at birth and problems of assessing visual acuity. There is an excellent second section on congenital malformations which are evident at birth or soon after and a third section on acquired disorders of the newborn. The book concludes with a discussion of the newborn eye in systemic disease.

I would pick out the sections on retinopathy of prematurity as being exceptionally helpful and easy to read, giving an excellent up-to-date review of this subject. The chapters on chromosomal abnormalities and anomalies of the eyelid are also outstanding. This book is well illustrated and practical. There are excellent bibliographies at the end of each chapter.

This is one of the best multiauthor American textbooks that has come my way for some years, and I can fully recommend it to every ophthalmologist in training. I think it will become a standard reference work on the eye in the first year of life.

ALAN MUSHIN


This is an unusual book. Since it is the third edition, I should know it already, but hitherto I have been unaware of it. At a first glance it would appear to be potentially an extraordinarily useful volume to have available for reference, preferably in the consulting room or not far away, and especially if one were to encounter a condition one did not meet often and for which therefore were uncertain of the best treatment. As a practical text I looked up five conditions at random in the index of the System of Ophthalmology (which although unsurpassed for comprehensiveness is not strong on treatment) and then attempted to find them in this book. Hypersensitivity of the conjunctiva, osteitis fibrosa, heterochromic cyclitis, diabetic retinopathy, and craniohypophysiosis were the conditions randomly picked out. The book contained informative articles on all five of the sample subjects, though the somewhat obscure ‘osteitis fibrosa’ of the System seemed to have changed its name to Engelmann’s disease and several closely related conditions. Extending the scope of the test by referring to the advice given in the conditions chosen, one is not disappointed. In my opinion this is an extremely useful reference book and will prove of value especially in busy ophthalmological hospital departments.

R SMITH


This informative book attempts a highly ambitious task. In essence it surveys the morphological, physiological, and pharmacological background to the synaptic circuits in the central visual system and discusses the ways in which the neurons in these circuits are influenced by the neuromodulatory systems arising in the brain and spinal cord.

The material is subdivided into four main sections. These cover the basic anatomy and physiology of the visual pathway and neuromodulatory systems of the brainstem and basal forebrain, the neurotransmitters involved, and the way the core systems generate state-dependent changes in the visual cortical and thalamic circuits. This work cannot be regarded as an introduction for workers outside the field: a good background knowledge in all the main areas is essential for anyone attempting to follow the main arguments. Its particular strengths are that it reviews the background literature in each of the main areas and attempts a synthesis phrasing the action of the brainstem and basal forebrain modulatory systems in the context of neuronal function in the visual system.

One has to say that it is not an easy work to read. Much of the information is presented in a very brief and nontelegraphic style, and one needs to be very interested in the material to follow through each section with patience. A level of caution is required, because some statements are clearly incorrect and misleading. For example, one learns on p 22 that in the visual cortex: ‘At variance with the projections of the cerebellum; the pyramidal neurons synapse mainly with aspiny or partially spined neurons.’ This is quite incorrect. The reference cited deals with a very specific connection made by layer VI cells in layer IV of the visual cortex, and here the conclusion is open to some debate. The majority of pyramidal cell connections are with other spiny cells.

The account of the circuitry and function in the lateral geniculate nucleus was, I felt, more balanced than the treatment of the cortex, and the main issues were nicely summarised. The discussion of the intracellular data regarding GABAergic mechanisms is both clear and thoughtful. The main focus of the book, however, is one that leads the reader to consider the state-dependent changes in these processes. The effects mediated by the cholinergic input to the lateral geniculate nucleus from the periaqueductal region of the pedunculo-pontine nucleus are particularly intriguing because there are some interesting conflicts in the available data. The main interest for ophthalmologists may well be in this section of the book covering the mechanisms controlling and modifying the retina’s access to the brain. Overall I would recommend this short book only to those with a particular interest in the field. It is far too detailed and specialised to help those meeting the topics covered for the first time.

A M SILLITO

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Glaucomea meeting

A glaucomic meeting in honour of Mr Redmond Smith, editor of the BJ O, will be held on 4 October 1991 at the Institute of Ophthalmology, 17-25 Cayton Street, London EC1V 9AT. The organiser is Mr Roger Hitchings. Registration fee: £95 (to include buffet lunch, refreshments, and evening reception). Details from Mrs State on Robinson. Telephone: (tel: 071 387 9621 ext 269; fax 071 490 8971).