

many years experience and that this book is intended to update, guide and expand the skills of the surgeon interested in eyelid, lacrimal and orbital surgery. It certainly achieves these aims but as a corollary the book is perhaps rather too extensive for the novice. It does not give major prominence to simple problems such as entropion and ectropion although they are covered, but equal prominence is given to excellent descriptions of techniques such as orbitotomies, coronal flaps and the correction of telecanthus.

There is an excellent first chapter on basic techniques including the taking of ear cartilage, nasal septal cartilage, and dermis-fat grafts which are not covered so well in most other textbooks. Procedures are described throughout with a combination of line drawings and photographs. There are excellent CT scans, X-rays and tomograms, especially in the section on trauma. Common eyelid tumours are very well illustrated with clinical photographs. The drawings often show the common errors in practice, ie the wrong as well as the correct technique. There are most useful lists in the orbital section on the differential diagnosis of anatomical abnormalities encountered with CT scans.

Although many surgeons have contributed to this book, the primary author has written at least part of almost every chapter and his influence and extensive experience is present throughout. His own very valuable contributions to ophthalmic plastic surgery are highlighted, such as his approach to the orbital floor via a lateral canthal incision. He also describes the importance of reattaching the posterior limb of the medial canthal tendon and marsupializing the cut inferior canaliculus in involutional medial ectropion. He was the first to explain the changes in some cases of involutional ptosis which account for a lateral tarsal shift and explains the technique of advancing the upper lid retractors to compensate for this defect without getting a 'temporal flare'. His technique for recessing the upper lid retractors involves using 'spacer sutures' and he likes to bury 7/0 silk permanently in the tissue rather than to use long-acting absorbable sutures which many other surgeons prefer but his techniques certainly all work

excellently and have been well tried in practice.

The book is excellently referenced but there is perhaps a natural tendency to give credit to the first accounts of a procedure which have appeared in the North American literature rather than to the actual originator of the concept if he did not happen to publish it in this literature first, eg tarso-marginal grafts were initially described in the German literature. In simple eyelid reconstructions, not everybody would agree with the principle of excising redundant skin purely for cosmetic improvement if the surgery was being carried out for tumour removal, since some would feel that all spare tissue should be saved in case of the need for further surgery in these cases. Some would disagree with the principle that it is 'mandatory' to splint a canaliculus when it is being repaired. These are all very minor differences of opinion and in no way detract from the enormous value of this textbook.

In summary this is currently the most valuable complete short textbook of ophthalmic plastic surgery covering the whole field of the subject. It is comprehensive, easy to read, well-illustrated, and well-referenced. It is not primarily intended for the novice but for anybody who wishes to pursue an active interest in ophthalmic plastic surgery it will be a most valuable purchase.

J. R. O. Collin

Manual of Common Ophthalmic Surgical Procedures ed Phelps & Kolder. Churchill Livingstone

This Manual is a compilation of certain surgeons' operative techniques and some of these are more up to date than others which makes for unbalanced reading (few today would advocate a Scheie's operation as a matter of routine). It reads more like a list of ingredients for a recipe with minimal advice on preparation and cooking. No indication is given to the novice as to why certain instruments are preferred or how to handle different tissues. Some chapters are informative and clear (squint, lids, orbit, evisceration/enucleation) but only to those who already have a modicum

of surgical experience. Interestingly those chapters have the best diagrams. Other chapters are rather narrow in outlook. Nowhere in the anterior segment sections is a corneal approach offered as a possible alternative surgical entry. The Preface apologises to those who may 'be offended by steps which are trite or contrary to their belief'—that does not excuse ignoring an important aspect of anterior segment procedure. This reflects the American authorship, as does the fact that nearly all the surgery is done under local anaesthetic as a first choice. The posterior segment chapters at least mention post-operative complications (not so in others). A little more however could have been made of the types of external tamponade available for repair of retinal detachments: there is a plethora of shapes and size of buckle and some guidance on the way to make the choice would have

been useful even for those who just need 'refreshing'.

Surgery is not just cutting things out. It is the thinking prior to opting for surgery and the management after it that make an operation successful. This book is intended 'as a guide to develop appropriate individual techniques' or as a 'refresher when operating less frequently'. It offers however some bad advice. For instance, if the eye bulges during an extracapsular cataract extraction—intraocular lens implant—penetrating keratoplasty procedure under local anaesthetic vitreous aspiration through a 22 gauge needle via the pars plana is suggested!

Unfortunately there are not enough chapters in this manual that fulfil either or both of the categories mentioned in the Preface to make it a worthwhile buy for the Resident being trained in the UK.

Michelle Beaconsfield