

Book Reviews

Clinical Ophthalmology. James L. Kennerley
Banks.

This succinct text is aimed at medical students, general practitioners and students of optometry. It assumes a basic knowledge of anatomy and physiology and develops concepts of pathology and treatment from first principles. It is based on comprehensible fundamentals and therefore has much to commend it as an introductory text. Although the emphasis remains upon primary care with reference to symptoms, signs and diagnosis, selected specialist investigations and treatment are described where appropriate. Hence the non-specialist may gain insight into the indications for referral.

It is a pragmatic book which encompasses the major areas of clinical practice within a slim volume including the pertinent features of history taking and examination. The fifteen chapters deal with clearly defined areas of ophthalmology and are logically subdivided into headed paragraphs. The spectrum ranges from the acute problems of injury and rapid changes in refractive error to the common causes of visual disability, such as cataract and glaucoma. Numerous clear diagrams and clinical pictures complement the articulate text and a comprehensive index allows quick reference for clarification of ophthalmological problems and their terminology. It accords due urgency to the management of serious disease and sensible explanations for expected age-related and other benign conditions. The merits of lens implantation are discussed concisely in the new section on cataract surgery.

The publication engages the reader instructively and in a manner which is likely to encourage the non-specialist to discuss the issues it contains intelligently with their patients. It is therefore a great asset for the readership to which it is directed and has the welcome potential for prompting timely referrals to the ophthalmologist.

Linda Ficker

The 1987 Year Book of Ophthalmology
Editor J. Terry Ernest, M.D., Ph.D. Associate editor Thomas A. Deutsch

Unfortunately for those unfamiliar with the 'Year Book' series, this edition fails to state what it sets out to achieve or how it is compiled. It was necessary to find a previous edition in order to gain this information. This stated "The Year Book series provides, in condensed form, the essence of the best of the recent international medical literature. The material is selected by distinguished editors who critically review more than 500,000 journals each year." The 1987 Year Book deals with literature published in 1986. The statement went on "journal articles are represented ... in the form of concise summaries of approximately 400 words plus tables and illustrations accompanied by interpretive comments by the Editors and Advisors." It does not state who has written the summaries but all the editorial comments have been written by Dr Deutsch.

The book is divided into eleven chapters each containing summaries of papers pertaining to a particular ophthalmological speciality such as glaucoma, cataract, and neurophthalmology. At the beginning of most chapters there is reproduced, in full, an original paper or review article which presumably has not been published elsewhere. These seemed superfluous and not in keeping with the aims of the book. The book is well bound, clearly printed and includes black and white photographs or diagrams to supplement the text where appropriate. There is a clear and comprehensive author and subject index facilitating speedy access to papers of interest. There is also a full list of those journals which are represented.

The content of the book is, in general, of a high standard with well written and concise summaries of the papers reviewed. The editorial comments at the end of each summary are succinct and to the point. As I progressed through the book I found that many