

**RADIANT ENERGY AND THE EYE.** By Sidney Lerman, M.D. Vol. 1, Functional Ophthalmology Series. (Pp 321, Figs 167, Tables 41. £25.00). London: Bailliere Tindall, 1980.

THIS well presented and well organised book discusses the known and potential effects and hazards of radiant energy on the eye. It admirably correlates current scientific knowledge concerning radiant energy with its biological effects on ocular structures and documents the various mechanisms whereby various electromagnetic wavelengths precipitate physiological and pathological alterations within certain ocular tissues.

The basic principles of radiant energy, including the absorption of radiant energy and classical and quantum mechanisms are succinctly and clearly outlined in an introductory chapter. Subsequent chapters examine the susceptibility of various ocular tissues to radiant energy and include detailed anatomical, physiological and biochemical descriptions of the cornea, lens, vitreous and retina. The information is up-to-date, well referenced and complemented by suitable tables, figures, and some outstanding illustrations.

Specific sections are allocated to the biological and chemical effects of ultraviolet, infrared, microwave, radio frequency, electrical and ionizing radiations on the eye, and where applicable, safety standards are documented and discussed. There is a section on the effects of visible radiation (including lasers) on the eye, which will have particular relevance to all ophthalmologists, particularly those undertaking indirect ophthalmoscopy and photocoagulation.

This book will have particular appeal to ophthalmologists and basic scientists engaged in eye research, and will also provide interesting and profitable reading for general physicians, radiotherapists and radiobiologists.

D.B.A.

**CASARETT AND DOULL'S TOXICOLOGY.** Edited by Doull and others. (Second Edition). (Pp 778, Figs 116, Tables 114. £24.50). London: Bailliere Tindall, 1980.

THIS volume, of 778 pages, is the edited work of over forty authors, all but one from the United States of America. It is an erudite review of the principles of toxicology, various toxic agents and their systemic effects. The first chapters deal with the absorption, distribution, excretion and metabolism of poisons. Then come chapters on the toxic responses of various body systems, such as the liver, blood, eye and the lungs. Then comes a review of different poison groups such as pesticides, heavy metals, plastics and toxins of animal origin. The chapters in the final section are devoted to the applications of toxicology in the clinical, forensic and industrial fields. The volume brings together a wide range of topics usually covered in a number of separate volumes and includes important, yet less common, contributions on subjects such as chemical carcinogens, teratogens, radiation, food additives and contaminants and water pollutants. There is a comprehensive range of references at the end of each chapter, the most recent dating from 1978. This is a reference book for anyone with a toxicology interest. It is not one for the general practitioner's bookshelf. Those interested in clinical toxicology will find material concerned with the mode of action of poisons, their observable effects on the body, and the principles of treatment. Those interested in forensic aspects are also guided in the interpretation of the levels of toxic substances in the body tissues. The analytical toxicologist will find that his aspect of the subject is dealt with only in general terms. Biochemists and research workers will find the volume a good source of general information. All will get value from the references.

The volume is well produced with clean type and excellent diagrams. Considering the price of reference books today, the cost of this one, £24.50, is quite reasonable. It is to be recommended to those with a specific toxicology interest.

T.M.

**A HANDBOOK OF MEDICAL HYPNOSIS.** By Gordon Ambrose and George Newbolt. Fourth Edition. (Pp 213. £8.50). London: Bailliere Tindall, 1980.

THIS short textbook on medical hypnosis describes the history of the subject, discusses the medical ethics involved, describes the hypnotic state and its phenomena and gives a reasonably detailed account of the procedures involved in inducing the hypnotic state. The clinical applications of hypnotherapy to the neurotic disorders are also discussed as well as the role of hypnosis in anaesthesia, paediatrics, obstetrics and gynaecology and dermatology. The authors rightly emphasise the role of psychosomatic factors in many physical disorders. However, they have not addressed themselves seriously to the difficult problems involved in assessing the efficacy of hypnotherapy in these conditions. Neither is there any attempt to evaluate its therapeutic effectiveness as compared to other psychological methods of treatment. Nevertheless, this book provides a useful introduction to the subject.

G.W.F.