and to make efforts to stabilize the serum from the optical standpoint. I propose, however, to go on with Madame Gourfein-Welt in the study of the serum of cataractous and non-cataractous individuals and to see whether by improving the technique it may not be possible to diminish the sources of error."

Ernest Thomson.

BOOK NOTICES


It is not surprising that a fifth edition of this valuable book is called for, even though a fourth edition appeared as recently as 1923, and a reprint in 1924, for its popularity very deservedly increases year by year.

There is no text-book of its size which comprises such a rich and clearly arranged detail in ophthalmology, together with other sciences which bear upon it. For this reason it is a quite admirable text-book for students, while for those who have studied the subject for years it is replete with concise summaries which render it of real value for reference.

This edition has been carefully revised and several improvements in the text have been made. A short description of the use of the slit-lamp has been incorporated and reference made under the different headings where examination by this method gives us practical value.

Publishers are naturally anxious that all new work should be incorporated in a new edition in order that critics should not be able to say it is not entirely up to date, and it would be easy to overload a text-book for students with a mass of undigested material. The author has wisely refrained from a surfeit of this nature, and while combining all essential new material he has kept a just sense of proportion.

The work as before is throughout admirably illustrated both with coloured and line drawings.


The fact that a third edition has been found necessary indicates that this book supplies a need of those to whom it is addressed. Although not written by a medical man and although intended to aid the sight-testing optician, the conception and carrying out of the
work is worthy of praise, and ophthalmic surgeons will find a considerable amount of useful information, not readily obtainable elsewhere, lucidly arranged. In his preface the author says that "no apologies are needed for mentioning some indications of pathological conditions, since a person with defective sight may go to the optician when he should go to the oculist." The chapter in which he deals with these conditions is the weak spot in the book and we think would have been better omitted. We appreciate the term "Amblyopia ex abusu" for toxic amblyopias, but were unaware that it was a term in general use. The book concludes with a chapter on frames which should be of considerable use to ophthalmologists as it contains, in all too short a space, an amount of very useful information on a subject largely neglected in the ordinary text-books. If all sight-testing opticians were to take the trouble to master the contents of this book, and also, to carry out the frequent and italicized advice of the author as to the advisability of sending their clients to an ophthalmic surgeon in all cases of possible doubt, their case for recognition would be a stronger one than it is ever likely to become.


By the term "chiasmal syndrome" the signs and symptoms of interference with the visual path at the chiasma are referred to. These are impairment of vision, bitemporal hemianopia, and ophthalmoscopic changes. The book is divided into three parts: the first deals with the different methods of examination, including perimetry, ophthalmoscopy, and radiology, and with the various clinical forms in which the syndrome may be found in relation to tumours, syphilis, multiple sclerosis, encephalitis, injury, nasal sinus disease, and toxic conditions.

In the second part the anatomical relations of the chiasma and the mechanism of production of the symptoms are considered and in the third, the treatment of the various conditions.

Although the author insists upon the importance of perimetry, the description of the perimetric signs of chiasmal lesions is somewhat vague and lacking in detail. The ordinary perimeter is regarded as sufficient even for the examination of scotomata, and apparatus for examining the central field in more detail is regarded as unnecessary. As a result the reader, on the one hand, does not obtain a clear impression of what features in alterations of the visual field indicate a chiasmal lesion, and the author, on the other hand, seems not indisposed to accord a chiasmal origin to conditions in which the associated field changes show no definite evidence of this localization. For example, the field changes found
in such conditions as Leber's disease, uncomplicated pregnancy, and even toxic amblx'opia are mentioned as possibly due to the direct action of toxins on the chiasmal fibres, although this view is based upon hypothetical considerations only, and is unsupported by any definite perimetric or other evidence.

The section on anatomy is instructive and well illustrated and is alone sufficient to give the book a definite value.

In the section on therapeutics, the advantages of radiotherapy are discussed, and illustrative cases are quoted.

The literature is widely referred to and indicates that considerable difference of opinion exists with regard to the nature of the various forms of amblx'opia under discussion. Apart from speculative hypotheses based on slender evidence our knowledge of the causation of these forms of amblx'opia appears to be vague and uncertain. The author wisely refrains from dogmatism and is to be congratulated on his success in filling a gap in ophthalmic literature. As a collective review of the subject, the book will prove of value to physicians and surgeons, as well as to oculists.


The title of this work might arouse expectation of a complete exposition of the surgery of the eye: attention is therefore directed to the opening paragraph of the introduction in which the authors say: "We have not attempted to write a treatise nor an encyclopaedia, nor to describe all the operative procedures in ophthalmology since the days of Hippocrates. . . . Our more limited aim has been to indicate precisely the operative methods which appear to us the most assured, and to describe as clearly as possible the technique which in our judgment and experience is the best."

The result of their labours is a wholly commendable book, of limited compass, for which authors and publishers deserve credit. It is printed on very good paper, in clear type free from imperfections, and the copy in our hands is well bound. It is lavishly illustrated and the numerous excellent coloured plates add greatly to the attractiveness of the volume. The aim the authors set themselves has been attained: with few exceptions the technique through all the stages of operations is described with great clearness and without redundancy. As nearly all the operative procedures are illustrated the descriptions are followed with ease.

There are fourteen chapters of which Nos. III to XII inclusive deal with operations on lids, lacrimal apparatus, eyeball and orbit. Chapter I is entitled "Generalities" and concerns sterilization, the theatre and lighting, sutures and dressings. Those who know the
authors will be prepared for their insistence on meticulous care in all the steps of sterilization. They are emphatic in their choice of dry heat for sterilizing instruments. The paragraph on sterilization of the operator and his assistants opens thus: “On n'oserait pas écrire à l'heure actuelle que l'opérateur doit conserver un ongle long pour certaines opérations.” Chapter II on anaesthetics is devoted almost entirely to local and regional anaesthesia which the authors consider suitable and effective in the large majority of cases. Full details of the methods of inducing regional anaesthesia by deep injections are given aided by illustrations in the text. The authors express the opinion that, owing probably to the fear of toxic manifestations, engendered by cocaine, novocain has been generally employed in solutions too weak to be really effective unless an undesirably large quantity of fluid is injected. They therefore advocate the use of concentrated solutions.

Chapter XIII is devoted to the consideration and description of measures for constructing an ocular stump which gives satisfactory appearance and movement to the artificial eye. The best method in the authors’ experience is the insertion of a cartilaginous graft in the scleral cavity.

Chapter XIV, of 74 pages, headed “Traumatic Affections” deals very fully with injuries and wounds of all structures included in the ophthalmic surgeon’s territory and includes a good description of X-ray examination and localization of foreign bodies.

The reviewer has read this book with more than usual interest; its individual character and originality have proved very attractive: there is a noticeable and welcome absence of the reiteration of many operative procedures, the description and illustration of which have been copied into every work on ophthalmic surgery for many years. Within the limits indicated above the authors have produced a work of great merit and utility.


This publication embodies in book form the instruction given in class to those attending the Ophthalmic Clinique of the Faculty of Montpellier in 1924-25. “Its aim is to provide students with the indispensable elements of practical ophthalmology.” All that pertains to an advanced specialty has been omitted; hence no normal or pathological anatomy, theories of pathogenesis or operative procedures are described. As a result the author has produced for the student, or for the practitioner who is not specializing, a thoroughly practical clinical guide, tersely but clearly written.

Chapter 2 on ocular semiology, dealing with subjective symptoms and objective signs of eye disease offers to the student valuable
general information often lacking in text-books. This is followed by a chapter on anomalies of refraction which though brief should be easily grasped even by a beginner. Throughout the chapters on disease the student’s attention is specially directed to symptomatology. The last chapter consists of concise notes on the relation between general disease and ocular affections, which should have a definite value for the general practitioner.

The illustrations though mostly diagrammatic are helpful and well selected; with the exception of a diagram of the optic disc in glaucoma there are no representations of disease of the fundus. The book is well printed on good paper, in cardboard cover.


Although the action of ultra-violet light upon the eye has been widely dealt with in the scattered scientific literature of many countries this booklet is the first publication within our knowledge which is devoted entirely to the subject. For this alone it is interesting.

In large part the book is a brief resumé of previous work done on the physical and biological aspects of the subject, with which are incorporated some original experimental contributions which the author has made. He has undertaken an investigation into the limit of visibility in the ultra-violet region of the spectrum. This question he has attacked from two angles: by the use of preferential filters, and spectroscopically with a monochrometer. The first method he finds unsatisfactory and by the second he places the limit as lying between 4,046 and 3,663 Angström units and averaging 3,800 to 3,900. The conclusion differs from that of many others, notably and most recently of Glancy in America. To judge from the description given of the technique employed it is possible that the experimental conditions may not have been in every respect satisfactory. The matter is important from the sweeping conclusions which are drawn from his findings. The book deals simply with the anterior segment of the eye and it is stated categorically that abiotically active light cannot reach the retina. The work of others points to the possibility that it may do so experimentally if in intensity enough; and if this is the case the probability of its cumulative action under natural conditions when the eye is exposed over periods of years is not to be lightly dismissed. Either view cannot be accepted as proved, but Toulant’s conclusion is a dangerous one and is certainly based on questionable premises.

He concludes that the contraction of the iris to ultra-violet is due to reflex action from the retina stimulated by fluorescent light from
the lens. But the conclusion is again premature, and he has by no means eliminated the original suggestion of Broca that the contraction is caused, in part at least, by direct action on the muscle fibres, an action which has been definitely proved to occur elsewhere. The question of lenticular damage and the aetiology of cataract are left open; he himself never obtained any opacity observable by histological examination. With the intensities of radiation used this is not to wondered at; but he makes no mention of the recent work done on the more fundamental but subtler biochemical changes which have been conclusively shown to follow such exposures.

One point is raised which is worthy of note. He finds that the fluorescent action of ultra-violet on the lens is antagonized by the visible reds. We think that the evidence supports his contention that the infra-red has no such antagonistic action on the biological action of the ultra-violet, and it will be interesting if this peculiar action of the longer waves of the visible spectrum will be substantiated. Incidentally it has been known for some time that red light has a similar inhibiting action upon phosphorescence.

The pathological action of ultra-violet upon the structures of the outer eye is discussed and its clinical manifestations as solar and industrial photophthalmia. The question of therapeutics is treated cursorily; three pages only are allotted to it. Results are spoken of as excellent, but no personal observations are given, only the non-analyzed findings of others. A representative but incomplete bibliography is appended.

CORRESPONDENCE

AN EARLY CATARACT KNIFE

To the Editor of The British Journal of Ophthalmology

Sir,—Mr. James's account of Scott's cataract knife recalls to my mind an earlier one designed and used by Samuel Sharp a surgeon at Guy's, who wrote on cataract in 1761. To understand the significance of Sharp's knife it is necessary to recall the procedure followed by Daviel in 1747 when he performed the first extraction operation. He employed four instruments to make the section which was downwards in direction. First the cornea was perforated below with a half-curved lancet-shaped needle carried