
The aetiology and treatment of strabismus form a subject which can always be relied upon to produce an animated discussion in any gathering of ophthalmologists. The author seems to have felt this in the compilation of his book as he has been at great pains to give long quotations from various other writers on the subject. He divides the theories of the aetiology of squint into four groups: the muscular theory, which attributes the defect to an overacting muscle; the accommodation theory of Donders; the fusion theory of Javal, Parinaud, Verhoeff, and Worth, and finally the nervous theory which is the author's favourite. It is a little difficult to gather from the text what this theory means, as it is made to include "not paralysis, but the results of paralysis or disease," also cases where there has been destruction early in life of the foveal region of the retina and loss of the "foveal guide," while alternating strabismus is assigned to "an exclusively cortical or nuclear abnormality, probably due to malformation or an eccentric nerve habit."

After the chapter on aetiology, there follow sections dealing with anatomy and physiology and then one devoted to classification of the different types of strabismus. In a later chapter dealing with measurement of the defect the author lays it down that "if at any age the degree of squint is not decreased after four to six months of careful attention it becomes an operative case." His reasons for this are that the power of fusion can seldom be acquired after the age of six and that it is much easier to acquire it after the eyes have been put straight. Also, the longer the eye remains crossed the more complete is the suppression of vision in the deviating eye. The description of non-operative treatment follows conventional lines, but the reader is given a useful reminder "that the patient with the squint is an abnormal patient and he should receive a physical and neurologic examination." For example, toxic conditions in the teeth, tonsils and intestine must be dealt with, if present.

Operative treatment is very fully described and some interesting observations are made, thus: The surgeon's object in a squint operation is to obtain an accurate result and this can be brought about only by a careful and painstaking technique. For example, if a muscle is to be shortened it should be shortened by a definite amount which should be measured on a special strabismus rule
designed by the author. He also suggests that the power of the muscle should be gauged by a small spring balance. The operation of his choice is resection, performed if necessary on both eyes with the use of a strabismus brace—described in the text—to keep the eye in position during healing. By this means 90°-20° of deviation can be rectified, depending on the length of muscle removed, resection of 6 mm., reducing 90° of deviation and of 12 mm., 20°. In deviations of a larger amount, or where it is desirable to restrict operative procedures to one eye, the combination of recession of one muscle with resection of its opponent is to be recommended.

One feels in reading this book that it might with advantage have been shortened, and that the author instead of giving long literal transcripts from various authorities, often mutually contradictory, could have achieved the same object by a brief summary of their views. When one reads a text-book on some subject by an author of renown, one reads it in order to profit by his own experience and judgment. The views of others can easily be ascertained in a library and it seems a pity to expend so much space in giving a large number of extracts from various standard works, many of which will already have been read by those who consult this volume.


This small monograph forms a good example of the growing amount of ophthalmological work which is being done to-day in South America. It deals extensively with a series of 280 cases of tuberculosis of the eye which have come under the observation of the author, an interesting and critical study being made of their clinical manifestations, diagnosis, and treatment.

The disease is dealt with in four groups as it occurs in the conjunctiva, the episcleral and scleral tissues, the cornea, and the uveal tract. Tuberculosis of the conjunctiva appears to be very common in the Argentine; of the 280 cases only 72 had a normal conjunctiva, and the author concludes that 83 per cent. of tuberculous cases have conjunctival disease. The method of diagnosis largely relied upon is a reaction of the conjunctival lymphatics to a provocative injection of tuberculin, but the final test of microscopic examination of the tissues was carried out in many cases. This geographical incidence is interesting, and makes this part of the monograph valuable. The various types differentiated are as follows: diffuse, ulcerative, nodular, vegetative, lupus, and mixed. In discussing tuberculosis of the episcleral tissues, the author expresses the view that the majority of cases of phlyctenular disease are of tuberculous origin. Twenty-nine cases of tuberculous keratitis are described in detail: a tuberculous interstitial keratitis
is suggested by its peculiar obstinacy, the failure of response to syphilitic treatment, and the presence of a negative Wassermann and a positive tuberculin reaction. The manifestations of the disease in the uveal tract are reviewed according to the orthodox lines. In treatment tuberculin is stressed; it is said to be irritative in action, destroying the organisms by exciting an inflammatory reaction of an allergic nature and thus causing the disappearance of the tuberculous foci.


Dr. Menacho of Barcelona has gathered together in book form those cases which he considers are of more than usual interest which he has met with in a long and busy life in ophthalmological practice. The series comprises some two hundred cases and embraces all sorts and conditions of disease and anomaly. In each the history is given, the clinical appearance and symptoms described, the treatment and the further developments detailed. The text is liberally illustrated with schematic drawings. Many of them are of considerable interest, and many of them are rarities, and their sequence is pleasantly relieved by the reflections of the author interpreting and analyzing them. The collection is a valuable one, and suggests a sustained and careful interest, and an industry and enthusiasm which must be rare.


Although it is only three years since this book was first written the rapid growth of our knowledge of the biological and therapeutic effects of ultra-violet light has made it necessary completely to re-write and greatly to enlarge it in its present third edition. This of itself, while it indicates the extraordinary amount of interest which this method of therapy has excited, bears testimony to the value of Dr. Hall's book as an exposition of its application.

The volume may be considered under three headings. The first nine chapters deal in a simple and readily comprehensible manner with the elementary facts of the physics, physiology, pathology, biology, and hygiene of light. The subject is not entered into deeply or at all critically, but the information given forms quite an efficient groundwork for those desiring an intelligent knowledge of the essential facts. The second part, comprising four chapters, describes the forms of apparatus commonly used
and the technique of administration. The author is enthusiastically in favour of the tungsten arc, and finds it applicable to most conditions. The remainder of the volume deals with the many groups of diseases in which ultra-violet light treatment is advocated. If we were to advance any general criticism, it is that the value of these records would have been considerably enhanced if we had heard a little more about the failures of the method, for these are as instructive as the successes. The mention of ophthalmological conditions is merely cursory. Cases are related of benefit to iridocyclitis, corneal opacities, and cataract. As far as the first of these is concerned we entirely agree with the author in his opinion that the value of ultra-violet rays may be extremely marked; as far as the last is concerned, we are surprised. The technique recommended is the radiation of the eye "through the closed lids"; and since we agree with the statement found on another page of the book that the shorter rays are completely absorbed by one-tenth of a millimetre of skin, while the longest only penetrate as far as the deeper cells of the epidermis, when we think of the interposed layer of muscle, the tarsal plate, the conjunctiva, and the cornea, we are left wondering how this treatment of cataract can act.

CORRESPONDENCE

HEREDITARY GLIOMA OF THE RETINA

To the Editor of The British Journal of Ophthalmology

Sir,—In a previous paper on this subject in the British Journal of Ophthalmology, January, 1919, page 21, reference was made to the recording of further cases. I have now another case to report.

The patient was a girl, nineteen months of age, whose father now aged 34 years, had his right eye enucleated by Argyll Robertson thirty years ago on account of "something to do with the nerve."

There is no conclusive proof that the father's eye was gliomatous but I think this may be regarded as certain. The case was seen in private and complete details were not obtained.

Yours faithfully,

H. M. Traquair.

Edinburgh,
February 13th, 1928.