BOOK NOTICE


Elliot, in 1917, delivered the Hunterian Lectures on the pathology of eyes that had been submitted to couching in India. The present volume consists in part of a reprint of the lectures to which has been added details of the methods employed by the native operator, so far as they are known, some statistics on results obtained and a chapter on the diagnosis of cases of couched cataract clinically.

The very large Indian experience of the author enables him to speak with authority on this subject, and he is quite unable to find a single good word to say for the operation. Now, while the interest of the operation in England is mainly academic and historical, that is by no means the case in India. In that country cataract is rife and the destruction of sight due to the native coucher is on a very large scale. Elliot does not believe that the country is ripe for legislative interference. He says that the two distinct avenues along which an advance may safely be made are the systematic dissemination of knowledge through Government agencies amongst the people and the improvement of ophthalmic medical education. E. F. Drake-Brockman in a paper (Trans. Ophthal. Soc. U.K., 1905) pointed out that there was reason to suppose that vaccinators and compounders in the employment of the Indian Government were frequently couchers in disguise. If this is the case it should be possible to take some steps to prevent the prestige conferred by a Government post from being exploited in such a manner.

The plates are excellent photographs taken by the author to illustrate the pathological appearances presented by eyes that have been removed after couching has been performed.

The book should prove of value to members of the Indian Medical Services and others interested in the subject.

E. E. H.