BOOK REVIEWS


This slim volume sets out to describe concisely and yet as completely as possible the morphology of the various kinds of opacification of the lens as well as to give an account of the modern views of their causation.

Such a book stands or falls largely by its illustrations; one need not say more than that they are in the same class as those in Vogt's Atlas. The majority of the pictures are in half-tone, but some are in colour; they are nearly all slit-lamp drawings, but here and there, scattered through the text, are photomicrographs of the pathological lesions under discussion.

The monograph concludes with a very useful bibliography of the more modern literature. All in all a very good book.


The primary aim of this beautifully produced book is to present to practising ophthalmologists a comprehensive evaluation of present-day knowledge of ocular neoplasms, a subject which has advanced considerably since La Grange's book appeared in 1901. It is also intended to be of value to pathologists. Since the work is based upon the personal observations and convictions of a writer with great experience in both the clinical and pathological fields of ophthalmology it is hardly surprising that it succeeds admirably in both these objects.

The book is written clearly and concisely and does not suffer from the fault, common in ophthalmological literature, of quoting all contradictory evidence without careful consideration of the merit of the publications; each paper quoted has obviously been read thoroughly and the material is carefully assessed and skilfully woven into the pattern of the writer's balanced arguments.

The arrangement of the subject matter is commendable. The neoplasms are considered according to their tissue type rather than under the more usual but artificial headings of their anatomical sites of election. Thus in seventeen chapters the author deals with epithelial tumours, retinoblastoma, glioma, meningioma, tumours of the peripheral nerves, pigmented tumours, angiomatous tumours, leiomyoma, etc., and each group is considered from the point of view of incidence, clinical appearance, histopathology, differential diagnosis, prognosis, and treatment.

The chapter on pigmented tumours contains a valuable assessment of the various hypotheses dealing with their histogenesis, a subject which appears chaotic to the student and confusing even to the expert. The data is arranged in a masterly fashion, and although some will not agree with the conclusions and final classification, all the arguments are carefully marshalled and fairly presented. The section dealing with orbital pseudo-tumours is particularly good.

In the opinion of the reviewer there are one or two small defects which might be improved in future editions. Since all "carcinomata" are in fact epithelial tumours, a pathologist might take exception to the author's use of "epitheliomata" for malignant tumours of the skin; the term "epidermoid carcinomata" is to be preferred. While there are eleven pictures of intra-epithelial cysts of the anterior uvea there are no
BOOK REVIEWS

illustrations of some important lesions, such as meningioma of the optic nerve; the section on myeloma is somewhat inadequate, and solitary plasmacytoma is not mentioned. The difficulty in diagnosing iris biopsies in cases of suspected malignancy should have been discussed, and benign lymphomata of the conjunctiva might, perhaps, have received more than a passing reference. On p. 237, Fig. 115C should read 115B.

These, however, are very minor points, for the book is undoubtedly excellent and will long remain the standard work on the subject. Despite its high cost no consultant oculist or comprehensive medical library should be without it. The author is to be congratulated on a fine contribution to ophthalmic literature.


This is the most recent addition to a series of notable books upon ophthalmological subjects published under the auspices of the Société française d'Ophthalmologie. Professor Guy Offret is also part-author of a former volume in the series on corneal grafts and grafting.

In his introduction Professor Offret states that, despite progress in diagnostic and explorative techniques, the diagnosis of orbital tumours remains one of the most difficult in the realm of ophthalmology and his aim in preparing the present work has been to resolve some of this difficulty and obscurity by presenting a cogent whole, the symptomatology, diagnosis, histopathology, and treatment of primary orbital tumours. The resulting volume has been carefully planned and executed; the author has drawn upon the vast literature and upon his own wide experience to produce a balanced and integrated clinical and pathological study in which outworn and speculative ideas have been abandoned and adequate space devoted to detailed histopathological description.

The preliminary chapters are devoted to a systematic account of the symptoms and signs of orbital tumours. The value of radiography in diagnosis is emphasized and the advantages of tomography, in eliminating the false shadows which make plain radiographs of the orbit and nasal sinuses difficult and deceptive, are amply illustrated in a manner intelligible even to the uninitiated. The injection of air as a contrast medium into the orbital tissues and into Tenon's capsule is described and illustrated, and reference is made to cerebral angiography as an occasional means of revealing tumours not otherwise discernible. On the whole the author favours biopsy, believing that with careful technique the diagnostic advantage outweighs the danger of dissemination.

The statistical study which occupies Chapter III culminates in an impressive analysis of 676 surgically and histologically verified tumours mostly from French and American sources. It is doubtful if such a large series, carefully analysed, exists anywhere else in the literature.

Each of the subsequent sections is devoted to tumours arising from a particular tissue—osseous, vascular, neural, etc. This is convenient enough for the most part, but leads to some difficulties with myeloid tumours and reticulosarcomata. The subject matter is explored with meticulous care and each section enriched with detailed case histories. The author employs the term tumour in a wide sense to include almost all space-occupying lesions other than those of inflammatory origin. The use of the designation 'peripheral glioma' for Schwannoma and neurilemmona will induce in pathologists, at least, a sense of frustration, but it is the logical outcome of the view, not universally acceptable, that Schwann cells and the arachnoid endothelial cells are of neuroectodermal origin.

The 290 figures are mostly photomicrographs of good quality, some of which, however, have suffered a loss of detail in reproduction: it is perhaps a pity that the magnification is not stated. The bibliography contains over 1,000 references, and it is