

## BOOK REVIEWS

**Biochemistry of the Eye.** By ANTOINETTE PIRIE and RUTH VAN HEYNINGEN. 1956. Pp. 323, 36 figs, bibl. Blackwell, Oxford. (35s.).

It is good to see a book devoted to the biochemistry of the eye, and it is surprising in a subject so young and treating of an organ so small that it contains so much. The subject matter, indeed, in every one of its 310 pages of text, is so concentrated that reading is no easy matter, and close study is required.

The first section of four chapters deals with the lens. This may seem unusual as a start, but more is known of the biochemistry of this tissue and more work has been done on it than any other; the authors therefore start with a flourish. The chemical constitution of the normal lens is first described—the proteins and their immunological properties, amino acids and other organic and inorganic constituents, the transport of materials in and out, the little we know of its metabolism and the less we know of it when gone astray in cataract. The chapter on senile and experimental cataract is probably the best in the book; again the subject is largely unexplored and it is suggested that constant early changes are a decrease in glutathione and high-energy phosphate brought about by a variety of different metabolic disturbances in the growing cells. The biochemistry of the cornea is treated more shortly; about its intimate metabolism little is known. There follows a discussion of the chemical aspects of vision and the general metabolism of the retina. An informative chapter follows on the vitreous, and what can best be described as a short note on the aqueous humour. The book ends with a chapter on the ocular effects of nutritional deficiencies regarded through biochemical rather than clinical spectacles.

The book is of great value as a full summation of the biochemical work which has been done upon the eye, to which, of course, the senior author has made large contributions. In its presentation, however, it lacks co-ordination; too many facts are recorded in relative isolation to make interesting reading without suggesting at the same time the How and the Why and with little attempt at criticism. The book would be immensely improved if there were woven into it a more integrated philosophy—perhaps a difficult task in a subject still so incomplete.

**Veterinary Ophthalmology.** By R. H. SMYTHE. 1956. Pp. 356, 50 figs inc. 15 pl., bibl. Baillière, Tindall and Cox, London. (35s.).

It is indeed interesting to see a text-book on veterinary ophthalmology. It is generally recognized that veterinary medicine has grown by leaps and bounds in the last few decades and that its educative plans have been completely revolutionized; in this progress the study of ocular disease has unfortunately fallen behind, perhaps because the available information was scattered and not readily accessible. This book, which should go far to remedy the deficiency, is divided into two parts: a detailed study of the anatomy and physiology of the eyes of the animals most commonly encountered in veterinary practice (mainly the domestic mammals with some reference to birds), and a clinical section dealing with diseased conditions. The anatomy is sufficiently complete and well written and includes a section on congenital anomalies. The section on physiology, which discusses "animal vision", will be found most interesting reading. One or two points, however, arise. Few, except Thomson Henderson, would agree with the description of the maintenance of the intra-ocular pressure, and a pecten is present in all birds, including nocturnal species (if we admit that the cone-like structure in the eye of the kiwi is a pecten). The clinical section, which deals with diseases and injuries of the eye, should be of great value to veterinary practitioners and students, and also of unusual interest to ophthalmologists, particularly those which have no parallel in human pathology. The interesting thing,

however, is that so many conditions are parallel to those found in man, and how many respond to the same methods of therapeusis, modified, of course, to suit a patient who is less amenable than the average sick human being.

**The Anatomy of the Head and Neck.** By B. J. ANSON. 1956. Pp. 101. Saunders, London. (45s. 6d.).

This atlas represents the first section of the "Atlas of Human Anatomy" published in 1950. In the preface the author states that he had the special needs of the doctor in dental practice in mind, but obviously the atlas will be useful to students and doctors generally.

**The Peripheral Nervous System. (Le système nerveux périphérique).** By G. LAZORTHES. 1955. Pp. 348, 214 figs. Masson, Paris. (Fr. frs. 4,200; 84s.).

The author presents the anatomy and physiology of the cranial nerves and the peripheral nerves in such a way that this knowledge may be applied clinically. Only a small part of the book is of practical interest to the ophthalmologist but the chapters on the optic nerve, the motor nerves of the eye, and the trigeminal and the facial nerves are clearly written and well illustrated by line diagrams. Each chapter has a brief introduction followed by a note on development, and a detailed description of the nerve and its branches.

**Diagnosis and Treatment of Squint. (Diagnose und Therapie des Schielens).** By P. A. JAENSCH. 1956. Pp. 138, 64 figs, bibl. Enke, Stuttgart. (D.M. 11.40; 19s.).

This monograph, which forms one of a series of supplements to the *Klinische Monatsblätter für Augenheilkunde*, is a sequel to an earlier work by the same author. It outlines the problem of squint, and its interpretation and treatment as seen at present in Germany. The whole subject is dealt with shortly and comprehensively. The first section deals with the anatomy and physiology of the ocular movements the basis of fusion, retinal correspondence, and kindred problems. The second section passes on to pathology and the methods of diagnosing the various ocular disalignments that may arise; heterophoria and concomitant strabismus of all types are discussed *seriatim*, and the final section is on conservative (spectacles, orthoptics, etc.) and operative treatment.

#### BOOKS RECEIVED

The following books have been received and will be reviewed in *Ophthalmic Literature*.

**Aportaciones a la oftalmología.** By E. Romero. 1955. Pp. 141, 33 figs. Mexico, D. F.

*Documenta Ophthalmologica*, vol. 9, Pts 1 and 2. 1955. Junk, The Hague.

#### NOTES

##### OPHTHALMOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF EGYPT

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