RETINAL DETACHMENT AT THE POSTERIOR POLE

To the Editorial Committee of the BRITISH JOURNAL OF OPHTHALMOLOGY

SIRS,—I read with great interest the recent article by C. I. Phillips (*Brit. J. Ophthalm.*, 1958, 42, 749) on retinal detachments at the posterior pole. I agree with his statements, particularly when he says "that most are myopes and some have posterior staphylomata". I should, however, like to stress one point which was not specially mentioned in his article.

Favre (1954) pointed out that, in high myopes with posterior staphyloma, the area near the disc is a likely site for holes which are difficult to see by ordinary methods of ophthalmoscopy. He described two similar cases and specially remarked the importance of slit-lamp examination of the fundus in the diagnosis of such cases.

The so-called "area of Martegiani", at the margins of the posterior staphyloma, is a site that should be specially searched by means of the fundus slit lamp in every case of myopic retinal detachment, even if other holes at the periphery have already been detected (Schiff-Wertheimer, 1957). I have been able to observe this peculiar condition four times, twice in the same eye, in a series of nearly 300 operated cases in the last 3 years. In all my cases the holes were found with the Schepens indirect binocular ophthalmoscope, and not by direct ophthalmoscopy. Slit-lamp examination of the fundus was necessary in each case to confirm the indirect ophthalmoscopic findings. The vitreous was completely detached from the posterior pole in every case and no adhesions were detected between the posterior face of the vitreous and the margins of the retinal hole. I do not propose to discuss here the surgical management of such cases; this will be considered subsequently. In conclusion I repeat that the area near the disc should be carefully examined with the slit lamp before the possible causes of a posterior detachment "without hole" are considered.

Yours faithfully,

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REFERENCES

- FAVRE, M. (1954). *Ophthalmologica (Basel)*, 127, 351.
PHILLIPS, C. I. (1958). *Brit. J. Ophthalm.*, 42, 749.
SCHIFF-WERTHEIMER, S. (1957). In "Biomicroscopie du corps vitré et du fond de l'oeil" by A. Busacca, H. Goldmann, and S. Schiff-Wertheimer. Masson, Paris.

BOOK REVIEWS

Wolff's Diseases of the Eye. Revised by Redmond Smith. 5th edition, 1959. Pp. 226, 150 figs., 8 col. pl. Cassell, London. (42s.)

The fifth edition of Eugene Wolff's handbook on diseases of the eye has been revised by Redmond J. H. Smith. This is a short elementary account of ocular diseases in which the more common conditions are briefly but clearly described for the junior student and general practitioner. The text has been revised and brought up to date, the most