BOOK REVIEWS


The seventh edition of Adler's "Textbook of Ophthalmology" has now appeared—this time without the name of its original author, and legitimately so since everything in its pages has been changed in the four editions that have come out since the death of Stanford Gifford. The book, which is intended for the general medical student and the general practitioner, and has been reviewed in these pages on the appearance of each edition, is in every sense an excellent one, describing shortly and concisely the common ophthalmological diseases, eliminating rare conditions and giving prominence to those features of ophthalmology which are of general medical and neurological interest. In the present edition the text has been brought up to date and a new chapter has been added on the significance of those ocular symptoms which first bring the patient to his doctor. This introduction to the symptomatology of ocular diseases based on the patient's complaints will undoubtedly be of considerable value to the readers to whom the book is addressed.


This delightful little book, first published as a Penguin in 1946, has now appeared in a new dress by a new publisher. Simply written for the layman, it contains a vast quantity of information on most things associated with vision not only in man but also in a multitude of animals. It is full of good advice about ocular hygiene and the use of spectacles, and in the simplest way debunks many popular fancies of how the eyes may be harmed. It is good reading and an excellent demonstration of how much scientific information can be conveyed to the non-scientific reader in an interesting, understandable, and racy way.


This report has all the marks of lucidity and precision which one can expect from this team of workers. Their thorough-going study of the details of ocular refraction on 78 pairs of uniovular twins on the one hand and 40 bi-ovular twins and 48 unrelated coeval pairs on the other shows conclusively that, if environmental factors bear on refraction, they are likely to do so only to a small extent. Thus, uniovular twins show a high degree of concordance. This term denotes the finding that if the two eyes are dissimilar in one twin, an analogous dissimilarity is observed in the other, or that the dissimilarities form mirror images of one another. The power of the anterior lens surface has the highest (85.9 per cent.), and that of the posterior lens surface the lowest (53.8 per cent.) concordance of the refraction components examined. In 16.7 per cent. concordance in uniovular twins was complete, i.e. it appeared in all six components measured.


This book consists of alphabetically arranged sections for each of 1,600 substances known to have a noxious or disturbing effect upon the eyes, either by topical contact or through ingestion. The section dealing with each substance is completed by a list of

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important references. The author—whose special knowledge of this branch of ophthalmology is internationally acknowledged—contributes many authoritative observations of his own which have not been published elsewhere. A short section of twelve pages deals with the treatment of chemical burns of the eye in general terms and provides a useful summary of current methods together with the author's own expert comments.

A book of this type is probably the first of its kind. The method of presentation facilitates ease and speed of reference when the quick answer is required. A copy placed near to the telephone would be useful to enable the surgeon to give information with authority and speed. There are no illustrations and by British standards the book is highly priced, but its unique nature and the reputation of its author amply compensate for these small shortcomings. The printing is excellent and the literary style particularly lucid.

The index with its system of cross references is of an exceptionally high standard.


This is a French translation of the author's "Lecture Notes in Ophthalmology" published in 1960. The translators (Drs. Haudiquet-Niccolai and Haudiquet) have done an excellent piece of work, keeping closely—as Professor A. G. Ourgaud writes in the preface—"to the living and personal style" of the author. The 1960 edition was reviewed in this journal (vol. 44, p. 510), but it is felt that many of our readers may read more easily in French than in English, and it is to them that this little book is specially recommended.


In order to re-examine the question whether vitamin A improves dark adaptation, the author has investigated 23 subjects (fourteen aged between 18 and 40 years and nine aged between 40 and 60 years) with normal fundi and 21 subjects with retinal anomalies (5 with myopia, 7 with tapeto-retinal degeneration, 3 with retinal detachment successfully treated, 3 with choroiditis, and three who had been given light-coagulation). No one with evidence of vitamin A deficiency was included. The Goldmann-Weekers adapтомeter was used in the tests, which were performed in winter time and preferably in the late afternoon. Uniform light adaptation was followed by two trial tests. The pupil was either in its normal state or in maximal mydriasis. The tablets given to the subjects contained 7,500 i.u. vitamin A, 2·5 mg. Helienien, and 75 mg. caffeine.

The normal patients showed no acceleration of adaptation time and those with impaired adaptation showed no increase in threshold. The case reports are given in detail and are accompanied by graphs.

The author believes that the discrepancies seen in the earlier literature were caused by inadequate adaptometers or variations in technique.


This is an account of the symposium held in 1960, reprinted from the "Survey of Ophthalmology", 6, Abs. 6, pt. 2, Dec., 1961, which was reviewed in Ophthalmic Literature (1961), Abs. 3677. It will suffice to say here that every aspect of the condition is thoroughly covered by investigators who have long made it their study.
BOOK REVIEWS


It is 50 years since the Toxoplasma was discovered, 20 since its possible importance in human infection, both ocular and systemic, was pointed out, and 10 since Helenor Wilder found histological evidence of the parasite in 136 out of 442 eyes which had been excised for uveitis. Thereafter the tendency has grown to ascribe to this infection as much importance in the aetiology of uveitis, particularly of the posterior segment, as used to be given to tuberculosis in Germany, syphilis in France, and focal infection in Britain and America. It has now been established that it is not only a common congenital condition affecting especially the retina and central nervous system, but also a frequent cause of recurrent ocular inflammation in adult life. The difficulty is essentially one of diagnosis, for the rosette-like pigmented lesion at the macula is possibly the only pathognomonic clinical picture, and the actual finding of the parasite in a lesion can be done only after excision of the eye. At present, diagnosis is carried out by systematic tests—the dye test, the complement-fixation test, and the cutaneous test—but these are essentially of statistical value and only of significance if they are negative at the beginning of an active episode and subsequently become highly positive; they cannot prove the nature of a specific ocular lesion, nor is there any close relationship between the height of the activity and the severity of an infection. Remky and his collaborators in 1957 introduced the most important advance that has yet been made in the diagnosis of the condition by determining the production of antibodies in the eye itself and basing their diagnosis on the ratio of distribution of gamma-globulin between the aqueous and the serum, a very valuable test since the impermeability of the blood–aqueous barrier does not permit the accumulation in the intraocular fluids of antibodies from the blood. A relatively high content of antibodies within the eye is therefore strong evidence of a specific infection therein.

The first half of this volume deals with the history, the diagnosis, and the clinical appearance of the disease in all its aspects, and points out the importance of the new method of diagnosis. The second part is an elaborate and beautifully illustrated atlas of photographic views of the various types of lesion as they affect the fundus. An interesting feature of the book is the fact that the text is presented in German, English, Spanish, and French, a great boon to the reader (and the reviewer) in any country, but obviously an expensive method of communication.


Within the pages of this book can be found detailed information about those antibiotics which are of value in the treatment of ocular infections. The properties, antibacterial activity, toxic effects, and most suitable methods of administration are considered in relation to each antibiotic.

The author has collected information from a wide range of sources and quotes 141 references, but the book is no mere collection of the views of others, and embodies the results of an enormous amount of personal study, in both the experimental and the clinical fields.

The results are carefully presented and the author's conclusions clearly stated. Not everyone will agree with all of these; in particular the doses advised for antibiotics administered subconjunctivally seem very low. Examples of this are doses of 50,000 to 100,000 units for penicillin, and of 50 to 100 mg. for framycetin and neomycin.

The general approach to the problem of the treatment of ocular infection by antibiotics is excellent and no one can read the book without improving his own understanding of the subject.

While it is certainly a book worth reading throughout, it will also be of value for reference, since it is so well set out that it is possible to discover the properties of any particular antibiotic almost at a glance.
BOOK REVIEWS


The appearance of the second and third volumes of this comprehensive treatise on the physiology of the eye and vision is to be welcomed. The second volume deals with the general problems of the visual function in man. Pirenne of Oxford has contributed the section on the physiology of vision, Marriott of Oxford that on colour vision, Dartnell of London that on the visual pigments and the photobiology of vision, and Ragnar Granit that on neurophysiology. The third volume is written by American physiologists: Alpern of Michigan discusses the physiology of ocular movements and their pathological changes in strabismus as well as the problems of accommodation, the physiology of the pupil is described by Lowenstein and Loewenfeld of New York, and the secretion of tears and the phenomena of blinking are discussed by McEwan of San Francisco.

At the present time there is no source of information on this wide and specialized subject which can compare with this series. It brings in a variety of scientific disciplines and, as would be expected from the scientific standing of the authors, each of whom has contributed considerably to his subject by original work, every subject is treated in an authoritative manner. Moreover, there has been wise editorship, so that the work has become a co-ordinated whole, eminently readable despite the mine of information it contains.

The fourth (and final) volume, on visual optics and the spatial problems of vision will, we feel certain, maintain the same excellent standard.


This is a useful introduction to the anatomy of the primate visual system. There is a wealth of comparative morphology covering the retina, uveal tract, lens and zonule, extrinsic musculature, lids, and lacrimal apparatus. The author's approach is governed by a judicious mixture of analysis and synthesis. He has made several interesting contributions, especially to the anatomy of the uveal tract; in view of this it is perhaps too much to expect that he should be fully conversant with all the functional aspects which he introduces in such a praiseworthy manner to supplement anatomical considerations. Some of the biometrical tables are of interest but do not appear to lead to fruitful generalizations. Those on the lens are of doubtful value, the ages of the lenses not having received adequate attention. Some of the figures (the quality of reproduction being good throughout) are unlikely to satisfy a critical eye—in matters involving radial sections of the iris or the ciliary body, serial sections could be convincing. There is much useful information on the structure of Schlemm's canal, and for all the parallels which are drawn as regards similarities among the various primates, the species differences stand out as red as a traffic signal at night.

As the publishers require the price of the book to be mentioned in the review, one has to say that 75 Swiss francs (more than £6 sterling) is an outrageous amount to demand for a paper-back of some 200 pages.


(4 guineas).

This is a good book, written by an author who knows his subject, and has been very extensively changed from the first edition which appeared some 12 years ago. In it the reader will find an immense amount of technical information on the manufacture and fitting of spectacles, wherein the problem of marrying frames with faces, adjusting spectacles to social habits, the preparation of and indications for different types of lenses, and the practice of a workshop are discussed. Even the ethical code of the optician, his relations with his patients, with other opticians, and with the prescriber, are discussed in the same clear, concise, and readable way.