BOOK REVIEWS


This monograph is devoted to the ophthalmoscopical signs found to be of value in the diagnosis of hypertensive disease. The importance of arteriovenous nicking is stressed. A second, easily recognized, sign is segmental constriction of the arterioles; generalized arteriolar constriction is much more difficult to recognize. Arteriolar and venous thrombosis, haemorrhages, exudates, and micro-aneurysms are briefly discussed. The author stresses the importance of evaluating the fundus appearances without prior knowledge of the blood pressure, and urges that the observer should simply report on the changes found without attempting to put them into a Keith-Wagener or other form of classification. There is a series of first-rate colour pictures of hypertensive fundi.


This book by Mme. Puckovskaja, the disciple and successor of Filatov, deals in its first part with corneal grafting in cases of extensive and intensive corneal scarring, staphyloma, and bupthalmos. In the second part the surgical treatment of the aftermath of caustic and thermal injuries is discussed. Cases with symblepharon require plastic reconstruction of the conjunctival sac and often of the lids before a lamellar or penetrating keratoplasty can succeed. The book contains a long bibliography but no index.

Mme. Puckovskaja is a very experienced keratoplastic surgeon. She has performed 1,200 corneal grafts and 500 operations for severe symblepharon. She must be credited with the improvement of the technique of subtotal perforating keratoplasty. She describes her technique of total perforating grafting, and grafting with the inclusion of a scleral rim. These operations are usually followed by opacification of the transplant. They can, however, result in a structural improvement of the cornea, and pave the way for a successful partial keratoplasty.

Mme. Puckovskaja speaks with justifiable patriotism of the work of Filatov and of many other Russian ophthalmologists. She complains that Western authors have not taken sufficient note of these achievements. The bibliographies in the papers and books of Paton, Paufique, Rycroft et al. do not bear out this reproach, and the statement that the construction of the Filatov-Marzinkovski III trephine is not mentioned in Rycroft’s Corneal Grafts is incorrect.

Of course, there exists the lingual wall, and the more regrettable ideological wall between East and West.


It is usually assumed that dependency in the blind is an unavoidable consequence of their physical handicap. In recent years this traditional point of view has been challenged as knowledge of the importance of mother–child interaction has grown. There is increasing evidence that it is not the lack of sight itself but the differential maternal treatment which blind children receive which leads to their dependent behaviour.

This book is a study of the ways in which blind and sighted children and their mothers differ from each other. A sophisticated behaviour observation technique was used and the children and
their mothers were observed in their homes. The main finding was that the increased dependency of blind children is caused because their mothers tend to ignore the children's requests for help. In fact, the degree of self-reliance in children can be predicted with greater certainty on the basis of the mother's behaviour than on the basis of whether the child is blind or not. This study supplies scientific evidence that the best way of encouraging independent behaviour in blind children is to help the mother's depression and resentment of the fact of the child's blindness.


The 1964–65 Year Book of Ophthalmology maintains its reputation of providing an easy and excellent means of keeping up with advances and interesting clinical cases published in the world's literature during the period under review. As in its predecessors, the subject is divided topographically with three final sections on medical ophthalmology, the basic sciences, and surgery, and to introduce each section the Editor has written a very useful general summary of the most interesting features. These, and the wise critical remarks appended to the résumé of almost every paper which has been extracted, form the most useful features of the book. In the section on the basic sciences the Editor wisely remarks that the papers now appearing in this branch of ophthalmology, both in special research journals and the national ophthalmological journals, are so numerous and detailed as to make any approach to complete abstracting impossible, and he has adopted the wise course of reviewing only a few of them.


This book describes the theoretical background and clinical experience of enzymatic zonulolysis. The literature, mainly up to 1961, is reviewed, but the author's own work and experience help to make this volume, translated from the German, one of special interest.

In Part I, on the fundamental principles of enzymatic zonulolysis, the main chapters concern the relevant anatomy and micro-anatomy, experimental work on zonulolysis, and the actions of various enzymes on the different tissues of the eye. Of the ocular tissues other than the zonule affected by alpha-chymotrypsin, the damaged cornea appears to be the most vulnerable. The safety factor of a zonulolytic enzyme is calculated by comparing the dilution and time required for zonulolysis with that required for enzymatic action on other ocular tissues. With the usual concentration of 1/5,000 for 3 minutes alpha-chymotrypsin appears to be quite safe. However, just as alpha-chymotrypsin affects tissues other than the zonule, so the zonule is affected by enzymes other than alpha-chymotrypsin, such as elastase, fucin, and trypsin. Indeed, trypsin has been found to have a greater safety factor than alpha-chymotrypsin.

Part II of the book concerns the clinical application of zonulolysis. The remarkably varied reports on the surgical results of the use of alpha-chymotrypsin are difficult to review critically, although their very variety suggests that few of the complications are specific. However, the author's experience with trypsin is of great interest, especially as he considers that this enzyme is superior to alpha-chymotrypsin in cataract extraction. Certainly the results reported on 2,500 cases are excellent.

It is always refreshing when a clinical idea gives rise to academic questions. For example, the conflicting reports on the fine structure of the zonule are presented and the mechanism of zonulolysis is discussed. This book therefore puts a modern surgical method into a wider perspective. As modern ophthalmic surgery exploits more physical and chemical phenomena to facilitate the older mechanical techniques monographs like this will become increasingly important.

**NOTES**

**REFRESHER COURSE FOR CONSULTANT OPHTHALMOLIGISTS**

The ninth annual refresher course for consultants will be held at the Courage Laboratory, the Royal Eye Hospital, London, from February 21 to 25, 1966. Applications should be sent to Prof. Arnold Sorsby, Royal Eye Hospital, St. George's Circus, London, S.E.1. by December 1.