CORRESPONDENCE

INDUCED ELEVATION OF INTRA-OCULAR PRESSURE
AND THE VISUAL FIELD

To the Editorial Committee of the BRITISH JOURNAL OF OPHTHALMOLOGY

SIRS,—I am sorry that the papers which Prof. Bietti refers to [in his letter published in the April issue of the British Journal of Ophthalmology (1965, 49, 222)] were not known to me while I was working on my research. When I read them later, I was very pleased to see that my observations on early glaucoma and optic nerve diseases—drawn from a different experimental procedure—corresponded closely to Prof. Bietti’s.

Yours faithfully,

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BOOK REVIEWS


"The object of this book is to give a general outline of optics with particular regard to the problems of interest to students of ophthalmology." "As my own experience is limited, I have naturally consulted various textbooks concerning the subject."

These quotations from the author’s preface show that we are being presented with a new mixture of old (and some very old) ingredients, but it is very welcome. It is futile to expect an expert in one branch of knowledge to be completely au fait with everything that is going on in the spheres abutting on his. The most one can hope for is that his subsidiary sources are not further behind than, say, one generation, not necessarily equal to 25 years. And if Swedish ophthalmologists really are made to come to grips with the Bohr theory of spectra and the quantum theory, if they have interference effects carefully explained to them (as is done in this book), and if they get a good idea of photometry, light sources, photo-multipliers, and photo-luminescence, their surgery is unlikely to suffer. Alas, the book must not be sold in Scandinavia. Ocular optics is explained competently with lucid diagrams, and, much to our surprise, Stenström bases his formulae on the concept of vergence. This is healthy. The contrary is true of many of the author’s ideas on visual physiology. It is obvious that he has misunderstood some of the textbooks and papers which he has told us he has consulted; the budding ophthalmologist should be advised to skip this section, and to move on to the discussion of instruments and photographic optics, catholic in concept even though marred by one or two puny half-tone illustrations. Perhaps the lily would be gilded if the units of Planck’s constant were correct, and no mistake occurred in the spelling of proper names, but the author must be congratulated on his excellent command of English, and the book is to be recommended.
BOOK REVIEWS


This book comprises ninety-one electron micrographs of cornea, reconstituted collagen, and crystalline lens. There are captions and a preface but no text. The author is one of the pioneer workers in this field and originated much of our knowledge about the fine structure of the cornea. Any attempts to judge the merits of this book, however, must be made on the basis of what the author set out to achieve. If it is examined on her statement that it has some of the characteristics of an atlas and some of an art book, then it succeeds splendidly, because the pictures are beautifully portrayed and aesthetically satisfying. If, however, it is viewed as what in part it is supposed to be—the first in a series on ocular fine structure to be published by the Retina Foundation—then there are criticisms to be made. There is no attempt to relate the electron microscopy to extant light-microscopic anatomy and no clinical data relevant to the pathological material are given. The author states that additional information can be obtained from the bibliography, but this is particularly unrepresentative since only six papers are quoted, five of which are the author’s work. No mention is made of other papers, although the reviewer knows of forty-seven other published works on the electron microscopy of the cornea. Many of the plates are of excellent quality and all are well reproduced with fine screen blocks. A definitive account of corneal ultrastructure is yet to be written. Dr. Jakus is clearly the person to do it.


The stated purpose of this slim, well-bound volume which first appeared in German as Supplement 40 of the Klinische Monatsblätter für Augenheilkunde (1962), is to provide a comparative ophthalmoscopic and histological evaluation of the human retinal vessels in health and disease. This is most commendable, and is to a certain extent fulfilled in this work which, rather than being a textbook, is essentially a series of three essays or articles, the first dealing with “crossing phenomena”, the second with occlusion of the retinal veins, and the last with the ophthalmoscopic picture and histological findings in various retinal vascular disorders.

The first chapter on “crossing phenomena” is perhaps the most successful, providing a good clinical–histological correlation, and it is clearly demonstrated that compression of the vein by the artery does not appear to occur at the crossing area in the author’s material. The second chapter, on the occlusion of retinal veins, is based on a study of three cases, from which it is concluded that retinal vein occlusions probably result from alterations of the endothelium or media of the vein wall rather than from thrombi. In this chapter Figs 48a and b are supposed to be of the same patient, who has apparently aged ten years in the space of a year and a half. The last section is decidedly uneven, and the portion dealing with various diabetic complications of the retinal vessels is best left unread, unless one is well versed in the field of diabetic micro-angiography. Does the author really feel that diabetic micro-aneurysms start as petechiae? A number of the terms, for example, “nephrogenic retinopathy” and “parallel Marcus Gunn phenomena” are of dubious value. Perhaps the most valuable lesson to be learned from this last chapter is that red-free light may allow one to see details not visible by ordinary white-light ophthalmoscopy.

The book is unfortunately marred by dogmatic writing, which is in parts not very well translated. The colour illustrations hardly seem worth having, as they are much too schematic and not faithful to life, while the numerous postage-stamp size pathological photographs are virtually worthless. Some of the captions are misleading, and obviously those for Figs 80a and 80c have been transposed. The references are jammed together in running fashion at the end of the book (and Mackenzie is preferable to Makensey), and no index is provided, though the table of contents is reasonably complete.

This is obviously not a primer for the neophyte, nor is it complete and up to date, lacking material on modern techniques such as fluorescein photography (without which one is hard pressed to talk about stasis, etc.) and digest preparations of the retinal vessels. It may, however, be a valuable adjunct to those with a working knowledge of the processes of retinal vascular disease.
BOOK REVIEWS


A set of cards is provided for use with a stereoscope for the measurement of aniseikonia in horizontal, vertical, oblique, and over-all meridians. The apparent simplicity in presentation is off-set by the inadequacy of the stereoscope in making measurements of this type. There is also the difficulty that the patient will have in interpreting small changes in spatial relationships between the cross of the vertical planes. In my experience this test requires very good stereopsis and acuity. The very critical space perceptual sense required for this method is not always present in the patient one is measuring.

Inaccuracies are likely to arise in patients with phorias or tropias not corrected by the stereoscope. This set of cards will prove of value in demonstrating aniseikonia and illustrating the principles of Ogle and Ames as used in their space eikonometer.


On the occasion of the centenary of the *Klinische Monatsblätter für Augenheilkunde* a biographical index of German-speaking practitioners of surgery, gynaecology, ophthalmology, and dermatology is being published. The volume on ophthalmologists, written by F. Hollwich, refers to 2,600 oculists in Germany, Austria, and the German-speaking parts of Switzerland, as well as those living elsewhere who habitually attend German ophthalmological meetings or contribute to the German ophthalmological journals. It gives a brief biography of each person, his professional and academic history, and his publications. It is a pity that in referring to the last item the volume and page of the appropriate journals are given but not the date. The idea is a curious one; but the volume is valuable as a source of reference.

NOTES

**INTERNATIONAL RETINAL DETACHMENT SYMPOSIUM**

The Department of Ophthalmology, Baylor University College of Medicine, Houston, Texas, U.S.A., will sponsor an International Retinal Detachment Symposium on June 3, 4, and 5, 1965. The programme, "New and Controversial Aspects of Retinal Detachment", will include such subjects as the newer surgical techniques for retinal detachment, photocoagulation, laser coagulation, cryogenic methods, and vitreous replacement. Equal consideration will be given to important general matters relating to retinal detachment, such as vitreal and retinal pathology, electron microscopy of the retina and hereditary detachment, as well as to special problems related to surgical complications, glaucoma, macular holes, and giant tears.


Further information may be obtained from Dr. Alice R. McPherson, Department of Ophthalmology, Baylor University College of Medicine, Houston, Texas, U.S.A.

**UNIVERSITY OF ATHENS**

The Faculty of Medicine, Athens University, proclaimed Sir Stewart Duke-Elder as Doctor *Honoris Causa*, in recognition of his outstanding scientific work. The official ceremony took place on February 5, 1965, in the Aula Magna of Athens University.