BOOK REVIEWS


In this second edition a new chapter on autonomic nervous system drugs has been added and a system for calculating paediatric dosages of systemic drugs is given.

The authors retain their original intention in presenting a handbook for easy reference in the consulting room. While extensive coverage is given in the wide field of ocular pharmacology, a concise form is achieved by dividing the book into two sections: the first dealing with therapy of specific diseases and the second with a description of specific drugs.

Included in the introductory chapters are some basic considerations on the preparation of ophthalmic vehicles. This is followed by chapters on the mode of action and uses of groups of drugs such as steroids and antibiotics.

A brief summary of therapy of the common diseases is arranged under chapter headings of the anatomical tissue under consideration. Where appropriate, the considerations concerning choice of drug to be used are described in detail.

In the second section of the book the drugs are arranged in alphabetical order for quick reference. The actions, ophthalmic uses, side-reactions and contraindications, and preparation and dosage for each drug are described.

This is a very useful book. It does not set out to be a review of all forms of ophthalmic medication but nevertheless gives the pertinent facts relating to all the drugs known to be useful in ophthalmic therapy.


This book, written by an ophthalmologist and an orthoptist, presents a detailed introductory text to the investigation and management of squint, yet it is not detailed enough to consult on specific conditions and their therapy. It is perhaps a pity that the authors have been so modest in their aims, for this carefully written book is an orthodox and sound exposition of British thought on this subject. If more of the problems of squint had been stated, even as unanswered questions, this book would have been intellectually more exciting, for it does tend to be dull. Nevertheless, it is a valuable introduction to a complicated subject.


The high percentage of severe visual damage after surgery for the removal of intra-ocular foreign bodies makes any method welcome which promises to improve localization and operative extraction. The author has modified the procedure devised by Comberg, using a screen, at a distance of 2 or 3 metres from the operator, on to which an electronically intensified and magnified image of the foreign body is transferred. The extraction can thus be undertaken under visual control. The disturbance of the electronic intensification of the X-ray picture by magnetic influences precludes the use of the giant magnet. The weaker hand magnet has to be used. The author considers this as an asset as the violent action of the giant magnet may produce too much injury. The extraction of non-magnetic foreign bodies should be much facilitated by the visual control. Several examples of successful tele-X-ray extractions are given. One misses, however, statements whether the operated eyes kept or recovered a useful degree of sight.


This is a reprint of a symposium published in Surv. Ophthal., 11, No. 4, 1966 and abstracted in Ophthalmic Literature, 20, No. 3, March, 1967.

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This book has been written primarily for the paediatrician and general practitioner. In consequence, although it gives information about all aspects of eye disease in children, more emphasis is placed on the ocular manifestations of systemic and neurological disease and hereditary disorders than on the more specifically ophthalmic problems of strabismus, congenital cataract, and infantile glaucoma. Each chapter has been written by a different author, and care has been taken to avoid the use of esoteric ophthalmic jargon. The inevitable result is a certain amount of repetition, which although irritating does serve to emphasize some important points. The chapter on social management of blind children is particularly welcome, while a copy of the extremely detailed table describing inherited conditions leading to ocular pathology deserves a place in every ophthalmic department. If there is any criticism it concerns the way in which the book is set out. It would seem logical to have described first those disorders which primarily affect the eye, grouping them in anatomical order, and then to have proceeded with diseases of a more widespread nature in terms of the system principally affected, and the underlying aetiological agency. The authors have departed from this sequence on a number of occasions. Although this is by no means a comprehensive textbook of paediatric ophthalmology, it certainly deserves the attention of ophthalmologists who are interested in all aspects of their specialty.


This lengthy and expensive textbook is the most ambitious attempt so far to describe all aspects of ophthalmology in paediatric practice. The concept of such a book is beset with problems of scope and presentation, for it is manifestly impossible to deal comprehensively with all the ophthalmic problems met with in childhood in a single volume, and there are already authoritative books of reference in the fields of hereditary disease, strabismus, and neuro-ophthalmology. The fourteen authors of this book have therefore had to choose what they will emphasize and what they will condense. They have in fact decided to say at least something about everything, including embryology, operative surgery, orthoptics, radiology, and anaesthesia. There are some very good chapters, notably those on cataracts and glaucoma in childhood. However, the chapter on strabismus, more than half of which is devoted to a description of operative techniques, and which contains hardly any reference to paralytic squint, is really too brief to give a true impression of the importance of this subject. Moreover, a separate section on "syndromes" is not a very satisfactory way of describing a miscellaneous collection of disorders, most of which have little in common except eponymous nomenclature; many of them are in any case referred to again in the chapter on hereditary disease. The illustrations are numerous and technically excellent, but just as the text shows a certain amount of repetition, it does seem superfluous to have a picture of the same two siblings with Marchesani's syndrome on page 205 and again on page 297.

One must applaud the very considerable effort that has gone into the production of this textbook, but a better purpose might have been served by a more concise, authoritative, and essentially practical guide to paediatric ophthalmic problems.


This book deals exhaustively with the investigation and differential diagnosis of the causes of dizziness and vertigo. It is usual for patients with these symptoms to be referred to the otolaryngologist, but there are many non-otological conditions that may cause them and these are fully described. The inclusion of non-otological disorders is a basis for the claim that this book will be useful for any physician who has to deal with patients presenting with these symptoms. This is true, but on the other hand the editor, having gathered a number of contributors, has made no attempt to stifle any of them or to prevent over-emphasis of any aspect. The result is a book that may well be of inestimable value to the otorlogist; it will also be an excellent reference text for the non-otologist, but it cannot be said to be balanced reading for him.

This book is based on the contributions to the third symposium held at Miami Beach and upholds the standards set by the first symposium.

The theme reflects the current vogue in paediatric ophthalmology and this has resulted in some excellent chapters, among which is a stimulating exposition of current thought on the diffuse scleroses with a classification of the various forms of this condition. Apart from the paediatric aspect there are contributions on the extra-ocular muscles, pituitary ablation in diabetic retinopathy, and a first class anatomical and radiological study of the “sphenoid strut”.

In the preface it is stated that there is no overlap with previous symposia. This is a claim that cannot be sustained with the inclusion of articles on Schiötz versus applanation tonometry, ocular clues to stroke mechanisms, and the inevitable chapters on syphilis.

Nevertheless this is an excellent book, with first class illustrations. The latter no doubt contribute to the price, and if this is so it seems a shame that there are reproductions of two radiographs of cases of absence of the corpus callosum, especially as there is no discussion of the clinical features of this condition and of recent experimental work about it. Despite the price of the book, the cost per page is less than last year, being just over 6d.


This monograph, written by a well-known ophthalmologist and an equally eminent virologist, is a survey of modern conceptions on trachoma. The first part deals with the bacteriology of the TRIC agents and their immunology. These have now been cultured in many laboratories throughout the world and it is generally agreed that a very similar or the same agent causes trachoma and inclusion conjunctivitis. The second part of the book describes the prophylaxis and treatment of trachoma. The hygienic methods of prophylaxis receive due attention and the difficulties of treatment by chemotherapeutic or antibiotic agents are fully discussed; it is concluded that the most effective plan is to combine long-acting oral sulphonamides with the administration of topical antibiotics, particularly the tetracyclines or erythromycin. Even when this treatment is practised with enthusiasm, however, a cure does not always follow owing to recurrent relapses and the existence of resistant cases. The value of vaccines can only yet be guessed; several types have now been tried but the period of observation has been short. Bietti advises that they could be recommended for healthy individuals particularly exposed to infection, to aid chemotherapeutic and antibiotic treatment, to prevent relapses in highly endemic areas, and as a prophylactic measure in young children in such areas. It can hardly be claimed that this advice is yet fully justified.

NOTES

VII YUGOSLAV CONGRESS OF OPHTHALMOLOGY

Vrnjačka Banja, October 2 to 5, 1967

The chief topics are the Causes of Blindness in Yugoslavia (main subject) and all problems regarding the cornea, uvea, and retinal ablation; there will also be free papers.

For accommodation apply to “Putnik” Travel Agency, Vrnjačka Banja (Congress fee: 100 new dinars).

Address of Congress Committee:
Doc. dr. Zlatimir Kezmanović
Džordža Vašingtona 19
Beograd, Yugoslavia

CORRIGENDUM

In the article by M. E. Cameron which appeared in the May issue (Brit. J. Ophthal., 1967, 51, 295), on p. 297, l. 14, please read:

Phenothiazine was first used as a vermicide in sheep and cattle, etc.