

## BOOK REVIEWS

**A System of Ophthalmology—Vol. X. Diseases of the Retina.** By S. DUKE-ELDER and J. H. DOBREE. 1967. Pp. 878, 885 figs, 20 col. pl., bibl. Kimpton, London. (£10).

*Diseases of the Retina* maintains the high standard that we have learned to expect from Duke-Elder's pen, this time assisted by John Dobree. There has been a rapid increase of knowledge in this branch of ophthalmology through the new techniques in clinical examination of the retina and also in the study of its function and pathology. There have also been major advances in the surgery of retinal detachment, so much so that this branch of ophthalmology provides a life-time's work for those who are keen to produce consistently first-class results.

It is difficult to review such a major work. Everything about the retina is there, set in majestic order. The illustrations leave nothing to be desired; the bibliography is up to date; the historical background sets the findings in perspective; and, of course, the language flows so beautifully that the reader forgets he is absorbing a scientific treatise.

This volume is a worthy addition to this vast compendium of ophthalmic knowledge. Our specialty is fortunate in having at its disposal such a powerhouse of editorial efficiency. As a work of reference it has no equal. *Exegit monumentum aere perennius.*

**Dermato-oftalmologia.** Edited by J. CASANOVAS and the late X. VILANOVA. 1967. Pp. 391, 289 figs, 9 col. pl., bibl. Alhacen, Barcelona. (1200 pesetas).

Apart from the small German text book *Dermatologie für Augenärzte* by Walther Schönfeld, and short symposiums resulting from inter-disciplinary discussions in English at Congresses, the reviewer knows of no work, except this in Spanish, which covers the diagnostic and therapeutic problems where the specialty of ophthalmology impinges on that of dermatology.

The book arises from a course directed by Prof. Casanovas and the late Prof. Vilanova of the University of Barcelona. Eleven specialists from Spain and Germany in the fields of ophthalmology and dermatology contributed lectures to form a symposium. The introduction says, quite justly, that it will be of interest not only to the members of the two specialties involved, but also to general practitioners.

The book starts with a section by Casanovas on the histology and histopathology of the two specialties at the material area, and this is followed in Chapter 2 by the serological diagnoses of syphilitic and tuberculous disease by Vilanova, terminating with a note on the treatment of local neoplasms by the chemo-surgical application of zinc chloride of Mohs—a method which is now little used in Great Britain.

Chapter 3 on surgical therapy covers the whole field from congenital anomalies, degenerative changes, and neoplasms of the lids—surprisingly written by Dulanto, a professor of dermatology. The procedures outlined are conventional, though the use of abrasive methods to superficial lesions of the skin are little used by ophthalmologists, in spite of their popularity with plastic surgeons.

Chapter 4, again by Prof. Vilanova, contains a classification by morphology of the erythemas, purpuras, and erythrodermo-squamous lesions. This is mainly of theoretical interest.

Chapter 5 is an essentially practical one on the diagnosis and treatment of blepharitis by Arruga, who is a strong advocate of the application of selenium in combination with other agents.

Chapters 6 and 7 are by Casanovas, dealing first with the dermatoses due to fungi, bacteria, and viruses, including herpes zoster, and secondly those due to tuberculosis, syphilis, and leprosy. For this he advocates the use of sulphones rather than chaulmoogra oil as treatment.

Chapters 8 and 9 are by Dulanto; the former deals with metabolic dermatoses, starting with albinism and passing on to diabetes and lipid metabolic disturbances (also including a new entity, acrodermatitis enteropathica), and the latter with keratomalacia and other deficiency diseases.

Chapter 10 by Orbaneja is on skin troubles due to physical agencies, including congenital porphyria; and Chapter 11 deals with allergic lesions.

In Chapters 12 and 13 Esteller-Luengo deals with pilosebaceous diseases arising from the follicles, and pigment diseases such as melanosis and depigmentation.

Chapter 14, again by Vilanova, deals with benign and malignant tumours of the lids, and again surgical treatment is included (in the form of Hughes' plastic operation), although the section is by a dermatologist.

Chapter 15 on syndermatotic cataract is by Perez-Llorca, who mentions in passing the cataract associated with pointed epiphyses.

Jaeger, in Chapters 16 and 17, deals successively with phacomatoses and the oculo-mucocutaneous syndromes.

Chapter 18 deals with the rarer collagenoses and Chapter 19 (both are by Schreck and Wollensak) with the complications of lesser-known skin troubles, such as those associated with angioid streaks in the retina and keratoconus, which latter is occasionally associated genetically with atopic dermatitis.

Two of the most important features are the really beautiful coloured plates and the complete bibliography. The index gives chapter headings only and there is a certain amount of overlap between the authors, but in general the book is one for easy reference and the authors are to be congratulated not only upon their idea, but also upon the systematic and practical way they have carried it out to produce a book which has no exact counterpart in any other country.

**Symposium on Glaucoma.** Transactions of the New Orleans Academy of Ophthalmology. 1967. Pp. 306, numerous figs, refs. Kimpton, London. (7½ *gns*).

At this symposium eight papers on various aspects of glaucoma were followed by a round-table discussion. The papers covered the histology of the outflow channels, the diagnosis of glaucoma, the examination of the optic nerve, topical steroids, and medical and surgical treatment. There is nothing particularly new in any of them, but they provide a useful review of current thought on these topics. The round-table discussion, really a "brains trust", takes up 100 pages and is the most interesting and valuable part of this book which could be read with profit by students and younger ophthalmologists.

**Glaucoma. A Symposium held at the XX International Congress of Ophthalmology, Munich, 1966.** Edited by W. LEYDHECKER. 1967. Pp. 265, 93 figs, refs. Karger, Basel. (£6 17s. 6d.).

In this symposium held at Tutzing Castle, the topics discussed included the structure of the trabecular meshwork, pseudo-facility, uveal circulation, topical dexamethasone and intra-ocular pressure, procedures in the evaluation of intra-ocular dynamics, early visual field defects in glaucoma, ocular hypertension, complications of glaucoma surgery, and suggestions for terminology in clinical glaucoma work.

Some of the papers are review articles and others contain descriptions of original work. Individually the papers will interest, to a greater or lesser extent, a large number of ophthalmologists; collectively they cover too many subjects to have made a really successful symposium.

**Ultrasonics in Ophthalmology. A Symposium held at the XX International Congress of Ophthalmology, Munich, 1966.** Edited by A. OKSALA and H. GERNET. 1967. Pp. 240, 80 figs, refs. Karger, Basel; Academic Press, London. (£6).

The proceedings of the 1966 Symposium on the use of ultrasound in ophthalmology which took place at Münster are published in this work. Most of the contributions on the diagnostic use of ultrasound still refer largely to the A-Scope Technique, although there is a short article by Baum of New York on his Intensity Modulated Technique in the diagnosis of malignant melanoma.

Perhaps the outstanding feature of the Symposium is a series of articles by Gernet which reveal a particularly critical attitude to the results obtained so far in this field. This is particularly so in the article on Ultrasound Biometry of the eye, where an admitted accuracy of 0.3–0.5 mm. in determining the axial length is given.

The range of diseases in which ultrasound can give diagnostic information does not appear to have expanded very greatly, but it is as well that improvements in techniques are being sought which will increase the value of the method in those fields where it is already of established value.

Two articles on Yamamoto's method of treating myopia with ultrasonic vibrations are included in this Symposium and one at least of these indicates that some amelioration of the condition may be so obtained. The field of ultrasound in ophthalmology is clearly becoming wider now that there is a suggestion of therapeutic value for this type of vibration, and the subjects to be presented at forthcoming Symposia will be awaited with interest.

**Non-paralytic Strabismus. Amblyopia and Heterophoria.** By S. V. ABRAHAM. 1967. Pp. 367, 62 figs, refs. Pan-American Publishing Co., Encino, California.

The author of this work is well-known as one who has pioneered the re-introduction of the use of miotics in convergent strabismus. He is clearly a clinician of wide experience and the text includes numerous case histories which are in themselves of considerable interest.

The format of the work is confusing; in fact the arrangement of chapters seems to be somewhat random. It is surprising, for example, to find anatomy and physiology appearing quite suddenly at Chapter 9. Amblyopia is discussed before strabismus is covered at all adequately and the author's classification of strabismus, while doubtless having some empirical value, does not allow clear comparison between his cases and those of other surgeons. Little attention is paid to pleoptics except to dismiss it.

The work is valuable in so far as it represents the author's personal statement. A reader who is interested and well versed in the subject of strabismus will easily gather which parts of this presentation are standard practice and which are somewhat more controversial. However, to the uninitiated, the somewhat dogmatic approach does not encourage critical evaluation.

## NOTES

### ANOTHER JUBILEE

The *British Journal of Ophthalmology*, which has just passed its 51st birthday, is delighted to extend its congratulations to its younger rival, the *American Journal of Ophthalmology* which celebrated its jubilee in January, 1968. It is only fair, however, to confess that this is the jubilee of the 3rd Series of the American Journal. The less said about the first, short-lived series the better; it was started in July, 1862, by a German adventurer, Julius Homberger, who had recently arrived in New York, and to maintain respectability in American ophthalmology a very respectable Ophthalmological Society was started in 1864 in its place, so that in that year the journal died. The 2nd Series (very respectable) was established by Adolf Alt in 1884 and the present series was first published in January, 1918, incorporating Alt's journal, *Annals of Ophthalmology*, *The Ophthalmic Record*, *Anales de Oftalmologia*, *Ophthalmology*, and *The Ophthalmic Year Book and Literature*—all the ophthalmic journals of the U.S. except the *Archives of Ophthalmology* which has remained separate.

The life of the journal has certainly been most successful under its various Editors—Edward Jackson, Lawrence Post, Derrick Vail, and now Frank Newell—and it is interesting that since its first issue 50 years ago it has maintained in general the same arrangement, containing original articles, editorials, the proceedings of societies, and abstracts from current literature. The Ophthalmic Publishing Company which is responsible for it must be congratulated on its financial acumen: the price of the journal in 1918 was 10 dollars; today it is only 12 dollars for internal and 14 dollars for external circulation, an accomplishment probably due to the extent of its advertising content and its astonishing sales of over 11,000 copies per month, a figure which includes 4,000 sent abroad.

The jubilee is celebrated in a fascinating way. The journal itself appears dressed in a glorious golden cover and it is accompanied by a free issue of a replica of the first number to be published in January, 1918. The reading of it provides a very interesting picture of the ophthalmology of 50 years ago, including among its stories the new American law to control ophthalmia neonatorum and notes of the several American ophthalmologists who were serving in Europe in the first World War. For most of us who were not ophthalmologically alive to buy it at the time it is a delightful gift.