Book reviews


As is so rightly pointed out in the preface to this volume, most ophthalmologists of more mature years, even those younger ones who have overcome the hurdle of their specialist examinations, tend to regard “optics” with a feeling of revulsion, associating the subject with page upon page of abstruse mathematical formulae difficult to understand and almost impossible to memorize. Let no one be deterred by memories of past headaches from perusing and enjoying this volume. Some formulation is inevitable for a complete study of the fundamentals of refraction and the provision of comfortable spectacles, but this is largely confined to chapters 2 and 3, 125 out of 862 pages. The remainder of the work, written in the eminently, indeed seductively, readable style which characterizes the nine volumes of the *System* already published, comprises sections on anomalies of refraction and accommodation, both physiological and pathological, binocular factors, eye-strain and the influence of illumination, environment, and other factors on ocular comfort. These are followed by most interesting and useful chapters on spectacles, by the value and comfort of which so much of our work is judged and of the technology of which so many of us are so ignorant, on contact lenses and on low visual aids. The final chapter gives a valuable analysis of the optics of those ophthalmic instruments commonly used in clinical examination.

Readers who are familiar with Duke-Elder’s *Text-book of Ophthalmology* will realize that the present work represents in large degree the sections on theoretical and clinical optics appearing in its first and fourth volumes. These, however, have been much expanded and extensive new subject matter has been incorporated. The grouping together of all aspects of refraction and accommodation and their anomalies makes the subject much more interesting. It may be that there are some who are contemplating omitting this volume from their collection because they think the subject is dull. They are profoundly mistaken. As here presented it is not, and the authors are warmly to be congratulated—and thanked. Their lucid and interesting exposition of that facet of our work which, for the majority of us, is the main source of our bread and butter, is invaluable. It is a pleasure, but probably unnecessary since it will be taken for granted, to add that the production and format of the volume are well up to the high standards we have come to expect from its publishers.


This second volume follows broadly the pattern of Vol. 1 (1967) in embracing a wide range of up-to-date topics, each dealt with by an authority in the specific field. Biomicroscopy, fluorescence angiography, and gonioscopy are discussed, and there are also chapters on keratoplasty, keratitis, and the ophthalmopathies of thyroid disease. Cryotherapy in retinal and cataract surgery and various aspects of strabismus and amblyopia are included, and the final chapter comprises a survey of dyslexia.


In 130 adult white rats the optic nerve was subjected to circumscribed traumatic lesions of different kinds and extent, and the near and distant effects so produced on the myelinated fibres, glia, and