Book reviews


In 1961 Étienne in collaboration with Albert Ourgaud presented the annual “Rapport” of the French Society of Ophthalmology on the “Functional Investigation of the Glaucomatous Eye”—the subject chosen for that particular year. Étienne's new book on glaucoma is an extension of his work on that monumental thesis, and is a beautifully produced volume worthy of the high esteem in which the members of the Lyons School are held.

Apart from the striking colour illustrations (which have been printed with a plasticized glossy finish to enhance their contrast), the book is a mine of thought-provoking information, and will repay any effort involved in reading the French. It is written in concise style and is divided into thirteen sections covering all aspects of glaucoma. The latest views on the anatomy and physiology of glaucoma are dealt with in detail, as are methods of clinical investigation, such as tonometry, tonography, the perlimbal suction cup, gonioscopy, and static and dynamic perimetry. The chapter on the classification of glaucoma includes a lengthy list of the common forms and rare syndromes associated with the disease, based on gonioscopic findings, but the condition of iridoschisis is not mentioned.

Aspirants for higher diplomas in ophthalmology should find the section on the pharmacology and clinical use of antiglaucomatous drugs particularly useful, as some textbooks of ocular physiology in the English language are insufficiently detailed on this subject. It is interesting to learn that the absorption of 120 ml. whisky promotes a fall in intraocular pressure lasting 4 to 5 hours. This should prove a popular remedy!

The surgical treatment of glaucoma is profusely illustrated in colour with emphasis on those procedures favoured by the author, such as iridosclerectomy ab externo (Foroni) for chronic simple glaucoma and thermo-sclerectomy (Scheie) for the chronic angle-closure type. The author does not give a definite answer to the controversial question of when (if at all) one should evacuate a choroidal detachment associated with a flat anterior chamber following filtering operations.

A chapter is devoted to cycldiagnosis and goniotomy, and another to cycloidiathermy, with its modification of angiodiathermy as practised in Lyons. Brief reference is made to cyclocryotherapy. The final chapter covers some of the newer procedures, such as trabeculectomy, the sinusotomy of Krasnov, and a detailed description of the trabeculotomy of Harms with an appraisal of its indications.

The value of this excellent book would be enhanced by a much more comprehensive index and bibliography, and a few of the black and white photographs are lacking in contrast. There are one or two misprints but these are minor criticisms and the book can be thoroughly recommended.


The fact that a second edition of this work has proved necessary within 5 years of the publication of the first confirms our assessment of the original volume in these pages (Brit. J. Ophthal., 50, 555, 1966) and justifies the econiums then accorded to it.

It was recommended not to the average medical student—or rather not, to be more precise, to those following the curriculum at present in vogue in British medical schools, but to those with thoughts of taking up ophthalmology as a valuable introduction to their future life-work, to those
doing junior House appointments in eye departments of general hospitals, or, indeed, of eye hospitals, to those in general practice who wish for a handy book of reference, and for eclectic reading to consultant physicians and neurologists.

This assessment still holds, in full. The new edition follows closely the pattern of the old, with some pruning, some re-writing, and improvement in many of the illustrations. A welcome, and unusual, feature is that, the format being the same, the new volume contains only 36 pages more than the old. Of these extra pages thirteen are devoted to a newly-introduced glossary of technical terms. This may well be welcome to our non-ophthalmological colleagues, to whom—we must admit—we are liable to write using esoteric definitions with which they may not be familiar.

This work continues to be, as it was first described, one of the better introductions to ophthalmology. The price increase of 48s. must, in a spirit of resignation if nothing else, be considered as very reasonable in these days, and it is a pleasure to record again that the production matches the high and consistent standards we have learned to expect from these publishers.


On the retirement of the recent author, the eighth edition of Adler's Textbook of Ophthalmology has taken on an entirely new dress. It is edited by Harold Scheie and Daniel Albert, and six collaborating authors from the school at Philadelphia have contributed to it. To some extent, it is true, the personal nature of the old book is lost, for we all became accustomed to admire and respect Adler's opinion; but in other aspects it has gained and the editorship has been good. As before, its aim is to provide the medical student and practitioner with a concise working knowledge of the subject, but drastic changes have been introduced to meet the requirements of alterations in medical curricula in America and elsewhere which involve the curtailment of the time devoted to the many specialities of medicine to the benefit of a more complete philosophy; the arrangement is less topographical and the subject is approached from the point of view of the basic sciences and their medical implications.

A preliminary chapter on the terminology of the subject is followed by a second on anatomy. There are chapters on embryology and genetics, paediatric and medical and neuro-ophthalmology, glaucoma, ocular injuries, and the principles of ophthalmic surgery. Then follows an elaborate series of appendices, occupying more than 100 pages, on the symptomatology of ocular diseases, the clinical examination of the eye, its optical defects, its physiology, and the appropriate pharmacology. The entire book is thus different from its predecessors, completely re-written and re-illustrated. It is, in fact, difficult to understand why it is called Adler's textbook unless it is to retain the connection with the school of Philadelphia. However that may be, the result is interesting, the venture novel, and the book certainly deserves the widespread popularity attained by the previous editions.


Seeing depends upon lighting, and without light no sight is possible. Perhaps the expert on vision has paid inadequate attention to lighting, and the lighting engineer has insufficiently studied vision. Whether this is so or not, it is clear that these two aspects have been developed independently. The purpose of this book is to further the attempts to provide a common basis for discussion of both vision and lighting. The author is a well-known writer on architectural lighting and daylighting and holds the chair of Environmental Design and Engineering at University College, London. This book is based on a course of lectures given to senior students of the human environment for the Diploma of Public Health, and for the Factory Inspectorate, but is stated to have been written with a wider readership in mind.

The first four chapters deal with the eye and vision, including binocular vision, colour vision, and the psychology of vision. This provides an interesting, lively, and not too academic approach for