Book reviews


It is generally recognized how impossible it is to investigate a process without interfering with its mechanism and studying the result under controlled conditions. In a sense, neuro-ophthalmology is an account of experimental models set up by pathological lesions and our understanding of the physiology of the nervous system owes much to careful clinical observation of the results of such lesions collated with pathological findings. Herein lies the fascination of Volume XII of the *System of Ophthalmology*. The subject ranges widely and presents a profound challenge to the pen of Sir Stewart in width and depth, but when the reader has reached page 970, it must be admitted that the challenge has been met and subdued. All aspects appear to fall inevitably into place.

Section I on the Visual System traces the sensory pathway from the optic nerve to the occipital cortex and ends with a chapter on the higher visual system, which includes discussion on cortical blindness, the agnosias and aphasiases, hallucinations, and psychogenic disorders.

Section II covers the pupillary and ciliary systems and Section III the motor system, including nystagmus and lid movements. Section IV copes with the trigeminal nerve and the secretory disturbances of the lacrimal apparatus.

No attempt is made to describe in detail the techniques or findings of radiography, radiotomography, pneumoencephalography, arteriography, phlebography, electroencephalography, or the use of radioactive isotopes. Nor indeed is there any need to delve into the pureris of our sister speciality for neuro-ophthalmology has a feast of its own to offer served in splendid style by the two authors to Volume XII.


This book forms the first of two volumes on this subject. Methods of examination in ophthalmology are becoming so complex and specialized that the publication of this book is very welcome especially as the many authors are experts in their own fields. The general plan is to give a short relevant historical introduction to the methods of examination with emphasis on the underlying principles used, the technical methods, and their application.

The book has an ambitious scope. Draeger and Richert describe the external examination of the eye. Müller gives a long chapter on microbiology. Tear secretion and tear drainage deserve rather a larger section, but Goldmann, as usual, has written a long and excellent section on focal illumination. Examination of the pupil is described by Schrader and ophthalmoscopy by Saunter and Rassow. Other sections are devoted to spectral reflectometry, tonometry and tonography, ophthalmodynamometry, radiological diagnosis, ultrasound, and the use of radioactive isotopes.

This book can be highly recommended and one looks forward to the second volume, but frequent revision will be required in order to keep it up to date.


This volume, which contains material presented at a postgraduate teaching course at the Rotterdam Hospital in 1967, is in three sections. The first discusses the angiopathies of the retina and choroid and gives a great deal of interesting information on how they may be investigated. The second