Book reviews


In the first part of this book there is a brief description of the international congresses which have been held since 1957, and at the end of the chapter the value and disadvantages of international congresses are summarised. In the following part the membership of the International Council over the period under review is given. This is followed by a mention of the activities of the council and its associated committees and subcommittees. Part IV relates to the Gonin Medal. A short biography of the medalists is given. The last part of the book deals with the Statutes of the International Council of Ophthalmology, of the International Federation of Ophthalmological Societies, and of the International Congresses of Ophthalmology. The regulations of the two awards—the Gonin medal and the International Duke-Elder medal—conclude this small volume. This is a useful reference work for anyone wishing to know the details of the activities of the International Council and its associated bodies.


The Good and the Great generously rub shoulders with the rest in this agglomerate of papers on vision, colour vision, and colour vision defects. Some of the information, for example, on tritanopia, is illuminating, some, like that on tricyclic psychopharmac and colour vision, could be much compacted. If one turns over the pages and the subconscious whispers 'déjà-vu,'—for example, in connection with responses to short duration red-green mixtures—'déjà-oublié' also matters, as when outdated 1931 data are used to determine tritanopic characteristics. However, the pearls are there, and for their sake it is worth digging through the book.


The author presents for the interested reader a meander through the various concepts attributed to the movement of light. Each theory concerning the behaviour of light is dealt with in a historical and philosophical sense. The book is not a textbook but a journey with the author to the library where he has browsed with leisure among the original papers and texts. For example, the ideology regarding space may span from Euclid as described by Daye in 1570 to Mach and his attitude to the analysis of visual sensation in 1959. This book, therefore, is one that can be picked up at any time and read in small parts. There is always enough to make the optically versed reader argue with the author, since many of the ideas expressed are not necessarily conventionally accepted. The ophthalmologist who is in any way interested in his Alma Mater will find the book refreshing and at times amusing (in an esoteric way). While the title of the book may be forbidding, the contents on the contrary are 'elementary, my dear reader!'


This book is aptly titled. It deals with those aspects of ophthalmic assessment which most often concern optometrists (ophthalmic opticians). The ophthalmologist, who is just as committed to ocular and visual measurement, should not be discouraged.

In 12 concise chapters Dr Henson covers the subjects of ophthalmoscopes, retinoscopes, tonometers, field testing equipment, keratometers, slit-lamps, ophthalmic photography, optometers, trial case lenses and refracting units, visual acuity instrumentation, lens checking equipment, and screeners. The most attractive feature of the text is its wealth of excellent diagrams, drawn by the author himself.