

human night vision as well as clinicians curious about the underlying physiology of visual function abnormalities.

F W FITZKE

Current Concepts of Multifocal Intraocular Lenses. Edited by Andrew Maxwell, Lee T Nordan. Pp 240. £49.00. Slack: Beckenham, Kent, 1991.

The development of bifocal and multifocal intraocular lenses is a natural one but strangely has arrived on the intraocular lens scene late. This book reviews the conceptual development of multifocal lenses sometimes in a rather anecdotal way but includes the benefits derived from spectacle and contact lens multifocal styles. The design of the anular, bull's eye, and diffraction grating type lenses is adequately covered and there is a passing reference to a split 'executive style' bifocal lens which would be more common in spectacle lenses.

The material overall is presented by an inspiring list of contributors. In the early chapters there are basic optics with much ray tracing and even wave front reconstruction to show how both refraction and diffraction lead to the image on the retina. These techniques are used to produce focus spot diagrams calculated for single fixed objects in a series of image planes at different distances from the lens. Thus the image quality for monofocal, bifocal, and multifocal intraocular lenses is derived. These spot diagrams are very revealing as to the quality of image that can be projected onto the retina from these various types of lenses and on the problems associated with them, such as tilt and decentration.

New optical and mathematical tools are brought to bear on the problem such as modulation transfer function in which image contrast is expressed as a fraction of object contrast and this function is plotted against line resolution, the resulting transfer function being of value to lens designers and users alike. Sound physical optics are used throughout the book.

All currently available types of multifocal lenses are discussed, including some not in very wide use such as the Nordan aspheric lens and the AMO Array multifocal intraocular lens, in which the entire refractive sequence is repeated in each of five relatively narrow zones. Zone plate lenses such as the 3M bifocal are discussed, but much less familiar to readers will be the phase plate lenses. All of these types are related to their diffraction limiting characteristics and the spot diagrams also form a measure of image transfer including aberration induced by off axis spots, tilt, and decentration.

The role of retinal imaging in processing and cleaning up the spurious parts of the spot diagrams is explored extensively and it is suggested that filtering of retinal noise by raising the threshold and by inhibition and coincidence may provide a gating mechanism which improves retina to brain transfer. There are extensive, essential discussions of decentration and tilt of almost all the lens styles. There is the suggestion that diffraction and Array type lenses may avoid these problems.

While the book is generally a supportive thesis for multifocal lenses, there is some balance provided in chapter 18 where Steve Charles and Paul Runge suggest disadvantages in relation to examination of the retina and internal vitreoretinal procedures. They also indicate reduced visual function where the light and contrast losing possibilities of multifocal lenses may be accentuated by co-existing retinal or macular disease.

The later chapters relate to iatrogenic and

preoperative astigmatic control and to arguments of capsular bag and sulcus placement. These are to some extent repetitive of material published elsewhere, especially in the *Journal of Implant and Refractive Surgery*. Much the same could be said of the chapter on A scan examination, although it is still worth reading.

In summary, this book is very useful for those who implant multifocal intraocular lenses. Others who choose not to may also find that it contains much theoretical information of value for all implant surgeons and for technicians involved in the support services for implantation.

CG F MUNTUN

Moving to Audit – An Education Package for Hospital Doctors and General Practitioners.

By Centre for Medical Education, Ninewells Hospital and Medical School, Dundee. Pp 128. Complete package (resource book and challenge pamphlets) £29; resource book only £12.50+£1.50 pp. Postgraduate Office, Ninewells Hospital and Medical School: Dundee, 1992.

In response to the increasing demand for doctors to become involved in medical audit, the Centre for Medical Education in Dundee has produced a distance learning programme aimed at both hospital doctors and general practitioners. The package is based upon a reference book, clearly and concisely written, which explains what audit is and is not, the potential benefits to be derived from medical audit, and how to initiate an audit programme within one's own practice.

While the initial sections of the book are likely to be useful to those who are sceptical about the benefits of audit, or completely ignorant of the concept, those who have already embarked upon some form of audit exercise may find themselves very familiar with much of the material in the first four chapters. The remaining two thirds of the book covers techniques used in taking samples of a population, how to collect, store, and handle data, and an elegantly straightforward section on basic statistical analysis. The level at which the book is pitched is probably right for most hospital doctors who are just beginning to familiarise themselves with the audit process, but each chapter contains valuable guidance on further reading.

The other components of the package are sets of questions, both multiple choice and brief written exercises, which come in two versions: one for hospital doctors and the other for general practitioners. They are designed to be used in conjunction with the reference book to make the participants think critically about the way in which they can implement or improve on their use of audit in their own practice and encourage their involvement in initiating audit. The responses to these exercises can be forwarded to the Centre for Medical Education, Dundee and guidance is then given as to how the participants' answers compare with those of other doctors involved in the programme. New exercises are dispatched at regular intervals to maintain continuing interest.

This package appears to have been well designed and produced and should provide a very useful introduction to those wishing to become involved in medical audit. It should assist them in carrying out meaningful work while avoiding many potential pitfalls and errors and help to maintain their enthusiasm for continuing critical analysis of their working practices.

COLIN HUTCHINSON

Collecting Ophthalmic Antiques. By Ronald J S Macgregor. Pp 56. £3.75. The Ophthalmic Antiques International Collectors' Club: Salt-coats, Ayrshire, 1992.

This excellent little handbook is a mine of information.

It is designed basically for the beginner in ophthalmic antique collection, but is so full of hints and wrinkles that anyone starting to shop for old items, in any field, will derive benefit, and gain tips on how to set about commencing their collection.

What appears to be a simple topic is soon expanded by the author, as he narrates the width of specialties within the subject. Thus one's fancy may be drawn towards spectacles or ophthalmic instruments at one end of the spectrum to eyebaths, books, and optical toys at the other.

The booklet ends with advice on the care and display of items, and there is a reference to museum collections worldwide, together with a list of market places and auction houses.

The author is to be congratulated on producing a stimulating, readable book, which will set the informed readers exploring their waste bins, and sallying forth into the highways and byways for hidden treasure of historic interest, and who knows, perhaps some value as well.

G V CATFORD

Books received

Blind and partially sighted children in Britain: the RNIB survey. Volume 2. By Errol Walker, Michael Tobin, Aubrey McKennell. Pp 292. £19.95. HMSO: London, 1992.

Fundamentals of Ophthalmic Practice. By S A Kamenetzky. Pp 150. \$50. Raven Press: New York, 1992. (Available from Gower Medical Publishing: London.)

All titles reviewed here are available from the BMJ Bookshop, PO Box 295, London WC1H 9TE. Prices include postage in the UK and for members of the British Forces Overseas, but overseas customers should add 15% to the value of the order for postage and packing. Payment can be made by cheque in sterling drawn on a UK bank, or by credit card (Mastercard, Visa, or American Express), stating card number, expiry date, and full name.

OBITUARY

T D V SWINSCOW DSC, MSC, MB, BS

Contributors to and readers of the *British Journal of Ophthalmology* will be sorry to hear of the death of Dr T D V Swinscow who was our technical editor from 1977 until 1991.

'Dougal' Swinscow was a scholarly man of small physical stature and unassuming manner, possessed of great charm and a gentle wit, but an eagle eye for grammatical errors, unsubstantiated claims, faulty statistics, obfuscation, and humbug upon all of which, and any other irregularities which in his view rendered a paper less than fit for publication, he would pounce with firmness but unflinching



courtesy. He never ceased to marvel at the extensive selection of mistakes and cock ups together with infractions of the laws of science and syntax which would be contributors contrived to include in their submissions. Many former authors (professors included) will doubtless remember his polite enquiries as to why certain numbers did not add up, why Figure 3 was not referred to in the text whereas another figure which *was* referred to in the text was missing, why certain passages were repeated several times in the same paper, and (a particular *bête noire* of his) why the pages were not numbered.

As a guide, philosopher, and friend to the scientific editor he was invaluable, not only because of his scientific and literary attributes but also because of his long experience in medical journalism from the political and legal points of view; he could spot an attempted scientific fraud or a potential copyright dispute a mile off and was always available as a steadying influence with fractious would be authors with grievances.

Thomas Douglas Victor Swinscow was born on 10 July 1917. He was educated at Kelly College, Tavistock, and St Thomas' Hospital Medical School, London, qualifying in 1940. He was soon in the RAMC, serving first in the North African campaign and later in Europe in the 1st Airborne Division. He took part in the battle of Arnhem where he was hit in the back by two bullets while saving a wounded man. He survived many attempts by the enemy to kill him, including one episode where mortar shells, aimed at him personally, fell to his right, to his left, in front, and behind, but after these

apparent ranging shots the ammunition fortunately appeared to have run out. He escaped across the Rhine with the rearguard but would only leave the wounded (in someone else's hands) when ordered to do so.

After the war he joined the staff of the *British Medical Journal* where he rose to the position of deputy editor. On his retirement from this full time post he took on the task of technical editorship of several of the special journals, but eventually settled for the *BJO* alone.

Dougal Swinscow was a man of unusual versatility. As well as his editorial activities he found time to become a world authority on lichens, founding the British Lichen Society and its journal *The Lichenologist*, and writing a textbook *The Lichens of East Africa*. On top of this he was an authority on medical statistics, his textbook *Statistics at Square One* selling around 100 000 copies; he published poetry in a journal run by T S Elliot, was an expert on the history and design of gardens, and combined this interest with his lifelong devotion to the Taoist way in his beautiful work *The Mystic Garden*, completed in a race against time with his final illness. He also wrote a fascinating autobiography, *Reap a Destiny - Divagations of a Taoist*, in which his colourful life and that of his slightly eccentric family background (his mother was a crack pistol shot and a heavy pipe smoker), are beautifully described.

He died on 24 September 1992 aged 75 and is survived by his devoted wife Josephine and three daughters.

REDMOND SMITH

NOTES

Congress of the Ophthalmological Society of Southern Africa

The OSSA congress will be held on 14–18 February 1993 at Arthur's Seat Hotel, Sea Point, Cape Town. Further details: Mrs Sally Elliott, Postgraduate Medical Centre, UCT Medical School, Observatory 7925, Cape Town, South Africa. (Tel: (021) 47–1250, ext 381; Fax: (021) 448–6263.)

Cataract '93

A joint meeting of the 4th International Cataract Epidemiology Meeting and 6th Scheimpflug Club Meeting, dealing with the epidemiology of cataract in its broadest sense and in techniques for imaging and analysing the anterior

segment of the eye will be held in Melbourne, Australia, from 6–12 March 1993. Further information: Secretariat, Melbourne University Department of Ophthalmology, 32 Gisborne Street, East Melbourne, Victoria, 3002, Australia. (Fax: +61–3–662.3859.)

European Congress on Ambulatory Surgery

The 2nd European Congress on Ambulatory Surgery will be held in Brussels on 19 and 20 March 1993. Further details: Dr Cl De Lathouwer, Brussels One Day Clinic, Avenue du Duc Jean 71–73, B-1080 Brussels, Belgium. (Tel: +322/424 1212; Fax: +322/425 7076.)

Joseph F Morgan Research Foundation

The Joseph F Morgan Research Foundation, with the support of Health Protection Branch, Health and Welfare Canada and the Canadian Council on Animal Care, is holding an international symposium entitled 'Current trends: in vitro skin toxicology and eye irritancy testing' on 21–23 April 1993 at the Radisson Hotel, Ottawa Centre, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada. Further details: Vicki Nash-Moore, Symposium Coordinator, Golden Planners Inc, 126 York Street, Suite 404, Ottawa, Ontario K1N 5T5, Canada. (Tel: (613) 594–8226; Fax: (613) 565–2173.)

Master's Degree Programme in Public Health Ophthalmology

A special master's degree programme in public health specialising in preventive ophthalmology will again be offered during the 1993–1994 academic year by the Johns Hopkins Medical Institutions under the auspices of the Dana Center for Preventive Ophthalmology (a World Health Organisation Collaborating Centre). The programme is designed for individuals with ophthalmic experience or training interested in initiating, developing, and providing leadership to national or regional blindness prevention activities and in conducting serious clinical epidemiological research. Ten places are available for participants from developing and developed countries. A small stipend awarded on a competitive basis may be available to a limited number of participants to help defray living expenses. For further information: Program Coordinator, Preventive Ophthalmology Program, DCPO, Wilmer Institute Room 116, Johns Hopkins Hospital, 600 N Wolfe Street, Baltimore, MA 21205, USA.