BOOK NOTICES


These are notes on a second series of cases of optic nerve diseases, a former series having been published in 1919. Two similar reports upon diseases of the choroid and retina have also been issued (vide p. 136). Details of 408 cases are included in the present issue. These publications constitute a mine of information for those who are interested in the subjects dealt with, but their value would be greatly augmented by the addition of a short summary of deductions from the material enclosed. Reference is made to the blood, renal, oral, and venereal conditions, whilst mention is made of other constitutional states which may bear on the diseases.

The reader will be struck by the large number of patients whose parents were cousins; about 50 per cent. of the general population of Southern India are, however, the issue of such marriages. One notes that cases, which are obviously not those of pure optic atrophy, have been included; also some of the notes are rather difficult to follow; a little more care in compilation would have greatly enhanced the value of a very interesting communication. Further issues of the notes will be looked forward to with interest; their publication is of considerable value; it may be questioned whether any other similar institution is doing this form of work; and the example might be imitated with profit.

R. H. Elliot.


This volume, described by the author as a study of the pathological anatomy and pathogenesis of tuberculosis of the uveal tract, is based upon a critical analysis of a relatively large number of records of tuberculous lesions of the anterior or posterior segment of the eyeball, and experimental researches on lines indicated by this analysis. The result is a work of great merit, in the production of which the publisher has played his part very skilfully. The book is beautifully printed on superior paper and the illustrations in the text (29 in number) and the three coloured plates (with 14 figures) reach a consistently high standard. The letterpress is singularly free from typographical errors.
To do justice to Lagrange's work within the usual limits of a book notice is beyond our powers: we propose therefore to indicate briefly the scope and general plan of the book and to give in full the conclusions with which the author furnishes his readers. In addition we give it as our opinion that every ophthalmic surgeon, in his own interests, should find an opportunity to read or at least to consult this monograph.

The book is in three parts.

Part I, entitled "Anatomical and Clinical Studies," begins with an historical section from which we learn that the published records of ocular tuberculosis date from 1837. In that year Gueneau de Mussy reported that in an autopsy on a case of phthisis he found numerous "granulations" in the retina, the structure of which was similar to that of granulations in other organs. This was followed in 1855 by an observation published by von Graefe concerning a hog's eye which was filled by a "tubercular tumour": von Graefe remarked that, so far as he was aware, no similar condition had been observed in man. Experimental research into ocular tuberculosis began in 1877 when Haensell for the first time induced tuberculosis of the uveal tract in an animal, by inoculation into the anterior chamber.

The following section deals with the various forms of tuberculosis of the uveal tract, (a) in the posterior segment of the globe, (b) in the anterior: the latter part contains two illustrations, one clinical, one histological, of diffuse tuberculosis of the iris. The next chapter consists of an "analytical study" of all the author's observations; it contains clinical and pathological details of twelve cases and in the majority of them excellent illustrations of the anatomical and histological appearances. It is followed by a chapter entitled "a synthetic study of observations." These two chapters extend to 60 pages; they are full of interest and worthy of careful study.

Part II. "A study in pathogenesis" contains two chapters. In the first the author deals with tuberculous infection in its more general relations and devotes a section to the consideration of the condition of acquired immunity, observed clinically and confirmed experimentally, to which the term allergie has been applied, and another section to the contrasted condition, in which some interruption to this acquired immunity has occurred (e.g. hepatic diseases), described by the term anergie. In another section super-infection or Koch's phenomenon is discussed at some length.

The second chapter concerns infection of the uveal tract.

Part III, of 40 pages, is devoted to experimental researches. One chapter deals with infection by way of the anterior chamber, another with inoculation and super-infection by the conjunctiva and the last with experimental super-infection of the uveal tract.
At the end of each chapter is a bibliography in which the references are more detailed than in many such lists. At the end of the book is an alphabetical list of authors with paged references, followed by a table of contents. The latter might be more conveniently placed at the beginning of the book.

Conclusions

The tuberculous lesions of the uveal tract which we have investigated anatomically and clinically involve sometimes the anterior segment of the eye, sometimes the posterior; in the first instance they attack especially the base of the iris, in the second the equatorial region of the choroid. These facts deserve attention, for the careful study of their characters may help to determine the difference which exists in respect of pathogenesis between the above lesions and miliary tuberculosis of the choroid or of the iris. This latter represents the participation of the uveal tract in generalized bacillary infection such as occurs in severe primary infection and in subjects in a state of anergie. The present research on the other hand relates to forms of uveal tuberculosis occurring in subjects in a condition of allergie, and in our view represent lesions of super-infection.

The following are the conclusions based upon our anatomical and pathological investigations:

1. Tuberculous lesions of the anterior segment of the eye show little tendency to invade the posterior part. Their extension into contiguous structures is forward, towards the iris angle whence they invade the canal of Schlemm and perforate the wall of the globe. This extension appears to be influenced by two conditions (a) the resistance of the tendon of the ciliary muscle and especially of the crystalline lens and its suspensory system which always escape invasion, (b) the direction of the flow of intraocular fluid carrying the noxious elements towards the canal of Schlemm.

2. The propagation of tuberculous lesions of the choroid of the exophytic type occurs in the zone of the vasae vorticosae, the perivascular lymphatic sheaths of which play an accessory part in the escape of intraocular fluids. In mixed and endophytic forms extension by contiguity into the retina and thence to the optic nerve is the rule.

3. In the tuberculomata examined during this research tubercle bacilli have not been detected by direct examination: the lesions to which they give rise are restricted to a circumscribed area of the uveal tract and are always accompanied by changes in or destruction of the uveal pigment.

Resume of observations made during experimental research.—

1. Injection of tuberculin into the anterior chamber of a rabbit free from tuberculous infection is not followed by a specific reaction,
and successive injections do not induce sensitivisation; but in an allergic animal an extremely minute dose of tuberculin provokes a reaction characterized histologically by changes in the corneal stroma and by an intense and rapid capillary reaction. Inoculation of a guinea-pig with portions of uvea showing such reaction has never yielded positive results which could be considered as confirmatory of bacillary transference.

2. Inoculation of tubercle in a rabbit has been obtained by the instillation of bacilli from man into the animal’s conjunctival sac. Dissemination of this infection takes place by the lymphatics (cervical and thoracic glands); it never spreads to the deep tissues of the eye and does not attack the uveal tract. Infection of this region has not been effected by subconjunctival inoculation with tubercle bacilli nor have we succeeded in inducing, by tuberculous super-infection of the conjunctiva, lesions deeper than the sclera. This is not opposed to the hypothesis of the uveal, i.e. endogenous, origin of tuberculous sclero-keratitis and episcleritis.

3. While inoculation with an emulsion of tubercle bacilli into the anterior chamber of a non-allergic rabbit is followed by the slow development of diffuse lesions, relatively rich in bacilli, experimental super-infection by inoculation in the anterior chamber induces a lively reaction and the immediate development of localized and rapidly progressive lesions, in which bacilli, difficult to find, are agglutinated in clusters and are undergoing lysis.

The macroscopic histological and bacterial characters of these experimental lesions are very similar to those observed in specimens obtained from clinical cases. The general characters of the lesions of super-infection with tubercle are comparable to the characters (anatomical pathological and bacterial) of localized tuberculosis of which the greater number belong to the group of surgical tuberculosis.

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POSTPONEMENT OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS, 1925

We have received the following communication from Professor Uhthoff.

"RECTIFICATION"

"CONCERNING THE POSTPONEMENT OF THE INTERNATIONAL OPHTHALMOLOGICAL CONGRESS"

"In the September, 1923 (p. 424), number of the BRITISH JOURNAL OF OPHTHALMOLOGY a declaration is published by the French and Belgian Ophthalmological Societies by which these corporations