MAILBOX

Advancing microsurgical instrumentation into the 21st century

EDITOR,—It seems a surprising omission from the Waldock's recent commentary on the future of microsurgical instrumentation not to have mentioned contamination with specific reference to transmissible spongiform encephalopathies (TSE). It is known that prion protein is not reliably destroyed by most disinfection or sterilisation procedures, including autoclaving at a temperature as high as 138°C for an hour. Although more effective methods, such as exposure to combinations of alkali and heat, are being developed they may require instruments to be particularly durable. Also fine, and particularly, toothed instruments require thorough cleaning before sterilisation by conventional procedures, to avoid retention of tissue.

Although there is no clear evidence of the transmission of TSE from one patient to another by ophthalmic surgery other than through corneal transplantation, the only extant Department of Health guidelines state that any instruments used on patients with Creutzfeldt-Jakob (CJD) or suspected of this condition must be destroyed. Patients with classic sporadic CJD are predominantly in their 60s and may come into contact with ophthalmologists because of cataract, glaucoma, and macular degeneration or because of visual symptoms caused by their condition. The number of individuals in the UK who are incubating variant CJD (vCJD), believed to be the human form of bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE), is unknown. Prion protein has been shown to be present in the tonsils and appendices of its victims; the possibility of it being present in the eye, and particularly in the retina and optic nerve of apparently healthy individuals, must unfortunately be entertained. The Department of Health has identified neurosurgery and ophthalmology as areas of particular risk, though unquantifiable risks of ophthalmic (or any set) involvement remains.

We agree with Kwok and colleagues that there is a need for everyone associated with the transmission of TSE from one patient to another by ophthalmic surgery other than through corneal transplantation, to consider the implications of contamination, in particular from transmissible spongiform encephalopathies. We agree that there is a need for any instruments used on patients with Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease presenting with visual disturbance to be autoclaved before sterilisation. Eye 1999;13:693-5.

Reply

EDITOR,—We thank Tullo and Taylor for their interest in our commentary and for highlighting a very important issue regarding the future of microsurgical instrumentation. Instrument manufacturers are aware of the implications of contamination, in particular from transmissible spongiform encephalopathies. We agree that there is a need for everyone associated with high risk of transmission surgery, such as ophthalmology, to rethink the strategies towards avoiding the risks of contamination.

This needs to include a review of the cleaning and sterilisation procedures as well as surgical instrumentation design.

As far as engineers and manufacturers of ophthalmic surgical instruments are concerned, there needs to be a complete reconsideration of instrument design. This includes a review of the materials being utilised, taking into account the need for durability to rigorous sterilisation procedures as well as cost. The assembly of the instruments must enable easy and thorough cleaning, while an evaluation of the methods by which manufacturing costs can be kept to a minimum may enable the production of affordable disposable instruments.

We believe that the case presented by us was compatible with a diagnosis of idiopathic polypoidal choroidal vasculopathy (IPCV). We have recently described the indocyanine green angiographic (ICG) findings in a group of patients with IPCV, its different modalities of treatment and follow up over a period of 6 years.

The polyps in IPCV persist following recurrent haemorrhages, and only disappear following laser ablation. Ophthalmic imaging, before onset of the submacular haemorrhage, in this patient showed classic features of central serous retinopathy. There were no polypoidal lesions (including the fellow eye) seen before or after the submacular haemorrhage in our patient. The hyperfluorescent spot, shown on the fluorescein angiogram and the ICG, bears no resemblance to polypoidal lesions in IPCV. In addition, a solitary lesion is not a characteristic of IPCV.

We agree with Kwok et al that IPCV is a cause of massive submacular haemorrhage; the coexistence of two diseases in one patient

Central serous chorioretinopathy complicated by massive bilateral subretinal haemorrhage

EDITOR,—We read with interest the report by Lip et al, describing a 43 year old Asian man with central serous chorioretinopathy (CSCR) complicated by massive bilateral subretinal haemorrhage. The authors attributed the massive haemorrhage to CSCR itself. As the authors have pointed out, massive subretinal macular haemorrhage could be due to several causes, including idiopathic polypoidal choroidal vasculopathy (IPCV).

In their article, there is a colour fundus photograph of the left eye (Fig 3A) showing a small red nodule in the centre of fovea with surrounding subretinal hemorrhage. The lesion corresponds to the hyperfluorescent spot in the fluorescein angiogram (FA) and indocyanine green angiogram (ICGA) in the same figure (Fig 3B, C). These clinical pictures are still compatible with the diagnosis of IPCV, although the presence of massive subretinal haemorrhage precludes the visualisation of other classic features of IPCV. Recently, we have had the opportunity of examining a similar patient presented with massive subretinal haemorrhage in one eye, with a history of CSCR documented by FA. ICG of the other eye showed the presence of classic signs of IPCV including dilated choroidal vessels with terminal polyps. As CSCR and IPCV are both choroidal vascular diseases, their presence in the same eye or same patient is possible.

Financial and propriety interest: Nil

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Retinopathy and myopia of prematurity

EDITOR,—I have some comments on the recently published article by Choi et al. dealing with long term refractive outcome and ocularometry variables in Korean children of very preterm delivery. As for the sample under study (n=65) there are certain points to be made, especially concerning the comparison of birthweight and 28 weeks’ gestational age. Exclusion of outlying values was not specified. In Korean children, severely preterm babies have a high prevalence of ROP. If unselected, this is the weight and 28 weeks’ gestational age. Exclusion of outlying values was not specified. In Korean children, severely preterm babies have a high prevalence of ROP. If unselected, the ROP severity may be higher than the study’s findings. The sample size of 65 is relatively small, and the results may not be generalizable to a larger population. Further, the study did not report the method of ROP classification used (Reese or others), which could affect the results.

Finally, it was interesting to see the split up according to cryotherapy for the 29 eyes with cicatricial sequelae of the retina. Myopia had −6.18 D. This might be interpreted as some protection exerted by the cryotherapy against the relative developmental involution that myopia of prematurity seems to represent. Otherwise, the cryotherapy itself has been blamed for generating myopia, but here it seemed to be subordinate to the severity of the eye disease for which the ablation therapy was applied.

HANS C FLEDELIUS
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deficiency was the cause of the epithelial healing problem and subsequent graft melting.

MARTIN FILIPEC

Late onset lattice dystrophy

EDITOR,—I read with great interest the article by Stewart et al on late onset corneal dystrophy with systemic amyloidosis (familial amyloidosis of the Finnish type/Meretoja syndrome) and their claim that this was the first case described in the UK. I would like to point out our case report published in the Br J Ophthalmol in November 1999.4 We described a classic case of Meretoja syndrome in an English woman which was confirmed by genetic testing of the patient and her daughter who both demonstrated the point mutation on the gelsolin located on chromosome 9.

The authors bring to our attention a second family with this disorder and rightly state that the concept of a geographically limited disorder—namely, familial amyloidosis of the Finnish type, must be treated with caution as it is conceivable that this condition can occur elsewhere.

In our patient, immunocytochemistry of the corneal button removed at keratoplasty showed no labelling of the amyloid deposits with antibodies to pre-albumin, amyloid A, and amyloid P. This was in contrast with other studies where amyloid stained with antisera to and amyloid P. This was in contrast with other studies where amyloid stained with antisera to amyloid and amyloid P. Indeed the condition can occur elsewhere.

Finnish type, must be treated with caution as indeed the condition can occur elsewhere.


BOOK REVIEWS


The Art of LASIK is the second edition of the well known Excimer Refractive Surgery: Practice and Principles, by Jeffrey Machat, Stephen Slade, and Louis Probst. It is an outstanding reference, not only for the refractive surgeon but also for anyone managing or co-managing patients who have had or plan to have laser refractive surgery. With the successes of refractive surgery on myopes, hyperopes, and astigmas being on everyone’s lips, it is easy to become complacent as the number of successful cases and satisfied patients continues to mount. While the first edition placed great emphasis on procedures and techniques, there have been numerous advances in both instrumentation and in refinements of surgical technique in the intervening years to warrant a second edition. However, as one reads this volume, which has the contributions and clinical expertise of 45 clinicians worldwide, one cannot help but be impressed with its comprehensive scope, but more importantly, with the authors’ concerns for avoidance of preventable conditions and their detailed management plans when postoperative complications do occur. The Art of LASIK also provides the reader with innovative chapters on the use of LASIK in patients with previous ocular surgery, as well as topography assisted laser ablation, and management of complex LASIK cases.

As one would expect, section one’s introductory chapter deals with refractive surgery options and with the historical evolution of today’s LASIK procedures from keratomileusis, PRK, keratorefractive, epikeratoplasty, and automated lamellar keratoplasty, as well as newer peripheral mass addition techniques (such as intracorneal rings and gel injection adjustable keratoplasty). Dr Machat presents an excellent chapter on the fundamental principles of excimer lasers and excimer laser surgical ablation, including discussion of the need for continual maintenance and the continual calibration of such lasers. He rightfully points out that despite the phenomenal precision of the ablation laser, PRK’s limitations revolve around the much less predictable effects of wound healing, thus paving the way for LASIK’s embrace by refractive surgeons worldwide. A useful section dealing with Munnerlyn’s formula for ablation depth and mathematical considerations involved in microkeratome produced flap thickness, maintenance of adequate residual stromal thickness, and diameter of ablation zone is provided, along with specific highlighted “pearls” showing the maximal correction possible using various LASIK techniques. These highlighted clinical pearls are present throughout the book, which serve to nicely emphasize major points and clinical observations.

LASIK surgeons will find the chapter on predictive formulas for LASIK most valuable, with nomograms provided for various levels of refractive correction and for the different lasers. The discussion of adjustment factors, based on altitude of the treatment centre, age of patient, and even dryness of the climate, is most interesting, as well as the discussion of LASIK, nomogram refinement from postoperative results.

Section two deals with the instrumentation involved in the LASIK procedure, including speculums, corneal markers, topometry, forcepts and spatulas, as well as irrigation cannulas and antisepsis containers (in the rare event of a free flap). A very useful chapter devoted to in-depth discussion of various traditional microkeratomers and their comparative data is presented, along with excellent photographs. A specific chapter covers the operation of the Chiron Hansatome and the “down-up” LASIK technique for production of a superior based hinge will be welcomed by both experienced and novice LASIK surgeons alike. This section also highlights individual chapters devoted to disposable keratomers including the FLAPmaker (used on a monitored basis as numerous sites worldwide, including the Center for Sight at the Queen Victoria Hospital) and the Hydroblade waterjet microkeratome.

Section three is devoted to the preoperative evaluation of the patient. This is an extremely important topic, which should be read by anyone involved in the care of the patient. Dr Machat, “Managing patient expectations is the pivotal element to creating happy refractive patients”. Additionally, he writes “A surgeon who never has a complication is one who never performs surgery”. Candidate selection, careful screening for preexisting conditions and anatomical limitations, as well as contraindications for LASIK are thoroughly explored, as is the topic of LASIK as the procedure of choice of patients over the age of 40 is given, but the reality is that few refractive surgeons wish to retreat patients, and as such bilateral LASIK treatment is commonly recommended. This is unfortunate as most people wish to shed their glasses or their presbyopic
contact lenses (monovision or bifocal variety) and now must use glasses to read.

Section four includes seven chapters devoted to detailed descriptions and superb photographic and diagrammatic illustrations of personal LASIK surgical techniques of some of the best LASIK surgeons. This will surely be one of the most valuable sections of the book for surgeons beginning their LASIK practices. Section Five is devoted to the topic of LASIK enhancements, whether for re-ablation, correction of regression, or for complications such as central islands, epithelial ingrowth, flap striae, or flap melt.

Section six deals with another critical issue for both the refractive surgeon as well as the corneal managing ophthalmologist—namely, the postoperative care of the LASIK patient. Here we have an excellent chapter detailing the specific normal and potentially abnormal responses occurring in the intermediate postoperative period, as well as in weeks and months after surgery. A wonderful section on corneal topography evaluation is presented, along with an excellent chapter written by co-managing ophthalmologist (Dennis Kennedy, OD), illustrating exactly how the healthcare team can work in the best interest of the patient.

The next section presents details of surgical outcomes for LASIK, including studies done at the Laser Correction Center (TLC) (The London [Ontario] Laser Center) outcome studies, and the CRS LASIK study. Two chapters follow, devoted to hyperopic LASIK. Another two deal with LASIK following penetrating keratoplasty, RK, and intraocular surgery such as phakic IOLs.

Section nine is another “must read” for the refractive surgeon, as it includes several chapters with specific treatment techniques for LASIK and LASIK enhancements. The photographic and diagrams in these chapters are invaluable and every conceivable complication is dealt with thoroughly, including chapters on epithelial ingrowth, flap striae, and overcorrection. My one criticism of this section comes only after an editorial viewpoint, in that there is considerable overlap in the topics discussed by the several chapter authors in this section, which could have been simplified by the streamlining by the editors. However, as with most ocular complications of surgical procedures and/or ocular diseases, there is a variation in clinical treatment detail, even though the basic management principles are likely to be the same. Thus the reader may appreciate these treatment variances when reading this section.

The final section deals with topography assisted LASIK techniques that can be helpful in cases of decentred ablation zones after PRK, irregular astigmatism after RK and PK, and asymmetric corneal astigmatism. In addition, the reader will appreciate the last chapter which contains 15 clinical cases involving complex LASIK management.

The Art of LASIK is an outstanding collaborative effort. The editors and contributors are highly experienced, and have greatly expanded our knowledge of this increasingly important surgical treatment of refractive conditions. Its major strengths lie in its emphasis on careful patient selection and counselling, meticulous preoperative, surgical, and postoperative examination and technique, and in the effective management of complications. The Art of LASIK should be read not only by refractive surgeons, but by all ophthalmic clinicians involved in the care of the refractive surgery patient.

JOEL A. SILBERT, Director, Cornea and Specialty Contact Lens Service, The Eye Institute, Philadelphia, PA, USA


As part of the Basic Bookshelf for EyeCare Professionals series Denise Cunningham’s contribution on clinical ocular photography is exactly what it says and gives a clear, basic explanation of a range of photographic skills and techniques needed to provide an ophthalmic photography service.

Aimed at professionals in all branches of eye care, subjects covered include basic and scientific photography, ophthalmic photography, external eye, fundus photography, slit lamp photography, and fluorescein angiography with sections on relevant darkroom techniques and photographic organisation.

There are 140 pages including a comprehensive bibliography and useful index. The photographs used to illustrate various viewpoints are excellent and ingeniously devised—for example, the use a photograph of the face with drawings of the pattern of blood vessels held in front of each eye to show orientation. The quality of reproduction in the publication is somewhat lacking, although this is not glossy hardback and the price reflects this. It is suggested that gaining knowledge of the interpretation of fluorescein angiography, including pattern recognition and association with disease or disorders, will make individuals’ work more stimulating and also make them more valuable to the employer.

This book does not include digital photography of any kind and neither anterior segment fluorescein angiography nor indocyanine green angiography get a mention. However, although the digital age is with us all, a reduction in sensitivity caused by attenuation of sound as it is transmitted through the eye is somewhat lacking, although this is not the sort of book that one could dip into, and it certainly is not the sort of “cookbook” that could take a beginner through a procedure. Reading most of the chapters in the main part of the book I found it difficult to believe I was not reading a formalised version of the authors’ talks on their favourite method of performing cataract surgery. There was a lot of description and opinion but not very much in the way of explanation or justification. This is not the sort of book that one could dip into, and it certainly is not the sort of “cookbook” that could take a beginner through a procedure. Someone trying to identify a technique that would suit his or her personal style would have to work quite hard to get what was wanted. The information is there but there is a great deal of repetition in the process.

The book does not cover flow mapping or spectral Doppler techniques nowadays used routinely to image blood flow. The authors generally attempt to determine blood flow in tumours by flickering of echoes as seen using A mode techniques.

I found this atlas to be a clearly presented and, within the limitations mentioned above, well balanced book. I would recommend it to all those using dedicated eye scanners, and to those starting out in ophthalmic ultrasound.

ALISON FARROW


This book is a diagnostic atlas of ophthalmic imaging. A and B mode images, three quarters of which are B-scans. The authors generally attempt to determine blood flow in tumours by flickering of echoes as seen using A mode techniques.

I found the title a little misleading since several of the chapters, particularly those towards the end of the book, really have very little to do with clear corneal incisions and only a relatively small portion of the book actually deals with the incision itself. For the most part what you have is a series of descriptions of how “I do phaco” by a series of well known cataract surgeons, which is fine. Of course, there are lots of other books along the same lines and another would probably not look so attractive.

What would be a catchy title for another of the same? Clear Corneal Lens Surgery? Am I being cynical?

Clear corneal cataract incisions were not performed very widely in the USA before phacoemulsification but many British and quite a few European readers will have been entertained at home with early descriptions of this technique through a clear corneal incision and will have been familiar with its many advantages over a corneoscleral incision. Thus, moving from a scleral tunnel to the cornea as they set-tled into phaco techniques was a natural and welcome step. I thought the chapter on historical background was superficial and lacking the detail which subsequent chapters contained. Expansion could have made a much more fluent presentation of the techniques and would have helped put it in better context.

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MARIE RESTORI


This book will, no doubt, sell well. It has a well known editor and many prominent contributors. The book has a high quality feel to it but is let down by the very poor photographic reproduction of many of the photographs taken from preoperative videos. James Davidson (chapter 12) can produce reasonable quality stills. Why can’t the other contributors? Tables and figures, taken from lectures, may look great on screen, but look tacky when incorporated into text. There is definitely no “house style” since some of the chapters have attractive line drawing figures in the text. The lack of style is irritating in a subject where presentation so is obviously important. Equally irritating is the needless repetition of some figures.

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www.ojoe.com
In summary, dear reader, if you are the sort of person who likes to read or hear about lots of nice cataract surgeons do their cataracts, then this is just the sort of book that you’ll like.

COLIN M KIRKNESS

Developments in Ophthalmology. Vol 32
Mycosis of the Eye and its Adnexa.

It really is a misnomer to refer to Professor Behrens-Baumann as editor since he has written all but the first chapter himself. I must plead a certain personal pleasure in being asked to review this book, since I have always found Behrens-Baumann’s writing clear and to the point. He writes from a position of strength about things he understands in a way that is comprehensible to the clinician.

The approach is straightforward and logical. An overview of important ocular pathogenic fungi is provided by a mycologist. Thereafter, there is a clear exposition of the few antifungal drugs available to us including a useful description of how these can be manufactured in drop form, which is of considerable use to those ophthalmologists working without the support of a good manufacturing pharmacy department.

There follow three large chapters or sections covering adnexal infection, keratomycosis, and fungal endophthalmitis. Histoplasmosis is treated separately and, finally, there is a chapter on laboratory experimental work which probably could be subdivided into animal models and pharmacology.

If I have any criticism it is about the very extensive listing the author provides in the clinical section. He has large tables listing fungi that have caused infection in various sites—for example, lids, cornea, or endophthalmitis. It is not explicit that these lists are meant to be exhaustive but the presentation makes one assume they are. They are not. He omits a number of single case reports of infections while including others. This may just be the fault of his search engine or perhaps more likely the fact that he missed them when they were first published. It is a small point but it detracts from what otherwise would be an encyclopaedic work.

The text is, nevertheless, concise. There are only 201 pages and many of these are lists of references (381 on keratomycosis). It is highly readable and of good practical value not just for the candidate cramming for Part 3 membership but for anyone, either specialist or non-specialist, who has to manage a case of infection. He gives useful information on how to improve the yield of laboratory investigation, always a difficult question. Perhaps this section could have been expanded a little. I would also have liked to have seen a little more on epidemiology (although this was covered) and on geographic variation which was only mentioned in passing.

These relatively minor whinges aside, this is an important text which should be on the shelf of every departmental library. The pages should be worn from constant reference. Fungal infection in the UK is rare enough that most of us have fairly limited experience in dealing with it. The easily acquired knowledge of an expert such as Behrens-Baumann is a godsend and is very welcome. Mr clinical director, please buy this book.

COLIN M KIRKNESS

CD ROM REVIEW


This is one of a series of CD ROMs on international health produced by the Wellcome Trust. The series was originally planned as a replacement when the trust closed its museum of tropical medicine more than 10 years ago, and has been a long time in gestation. The available software has come a long way in the past 10 years, and we have come to expect a degree of user friendliness that enables a computer illiterate such as myself to gain easy access to the material; but unfortunately this CD ROM did not come up to my expectations in this respect. It was only after some frustration and considerable help from my wife that I was able to get hold of the main menu. The menu revealed that the material was arranged in three main scenarios: a glossary, an image library, and a tutorial. The glossary is very broad and covers a wide variety of ophthalmological terms that bear no relation to trachoma. The image library is extensive, but includes a large number of pictures of Chlamydia trachomatis at various stages of its life cycle in tissue culture; it is hard to see that these will be relevant to most users with an interest in trachoma, who are unlikely to have access to tissue culture facilities. The other unfortunate, but undeniable fact is that all images are of very poor quality when viewed on standard PCs, whether desktop or laptop. I tried both, but the images were at best of advanced cartoon standard. The tutorial was well written and well planned, but also suffered seriously from the poor quality of the images; it would not be possible to learn how to diagnose or grade trachoma with images such as these.

In conclusion, given the choice, I would prefer a simple manual written on paper, which would be more easily accessible, and considerably more informative than this expensive produced CD ROM.

DAVID MABEY

NOTICES

Community participation in eye health and trachoma and the SAFE strategy

The latest issue of Community Eye Health (33) discusses provision of services for individuals with refractive errors with an editorial by Hugh R Taylor. For further information please contact Community Eye Health, International Centre for Eye Health, Institute of Ophthalmology, 11–43 Bath Street, London EC1V 9EL. (Tel: (+44) (0) 20-7608 6909/ 6910/6923; fax: (+44) (0) 7250 3207; email: cephressource@ucl.ac.uk) Annual subscription £25. Free to workers in developing countries.

COLIN M KIRKNESS

Residents’ Foreign Exchange Programme

Any resident interested in spending a period of up to one month in departments of ophthalmology in the Netherlands, Finland, Ireland, Germany, Denmark, France, Austria, or Portugal should apply to: Mr Robert Acheson, Secretary of the Foreign Exchange Committee, European Board of Ophthalmology, Institute of Ophthalmology, University College Dublin, 60 Eccles Street, Dublin 7, Ireland.

Guide Dogs for the Blind Association

The Guide Dogs for the Blind Association will host the 10th International Mobility Conference at Warwick University on 4–7 August 2000. Further details: Guide Dogs, c/o Michelle Grant, One Events (tel: 020 8682 2442; email: michelle@one-events.com).

Ophthalmology 2000

A conference “Eye care in the clinic and the community” will be held 9–12 August 2000 in Melbourne, Australia. Further details: John Keefe, Centre for Eye Research Australia at the Royal Victorian Eye and Ear Hospital, 32 Gisborne Street, East Melbourne 3002, Australia (tel: +61 3 9929 8360; fax: +61 3 9662 3859; email: 2000@cea.unimelb.edu.au).

American Institute of Ultrasound in Medicine—Millennium Ultrasound Course Series

A course entitled “Diagnostic Ultrasound in the 21st Century” will be held in New York City, NY, on 25–27 August 2000. Further details: Stacey Blessing, Public Relations Coordinator, AIUM, 14750 Sweitzer Lane, Suite 100, Laurel, MD 20707-5906, USA (tel: 301-498-4100; email: sbessling@aium.org).

DR-2000, International Forum on Diabetic Retinopathy

The International Forum on Diabetic Retinopathy will take place on 7–9 September 2000 at the Palazzo Reale, Naples, Italy. Further details: Francesco Bandello, Congress Secretariat, MGR Congressi, Via Servio Tullio, 4, 20123 Milano, Italy (tel: 39 02 430071; fax: 39 02 4808471; email: dr2000@mgr.it).

VIII Tuebingen Angiography course

The VIII Tuebingen Angiography course with wet lab will take place on 9 September 2000 in the auditorium, University Eye Clinic, Schleißhstrasse 12, 72076 Tuebingen, Germany. Further details: WIT—Wissenstransfer, Universität Tübingen (tel: ++49 7071 29 76439; fax: ++49 7071 29 5051; email: wit@uni-tuebingen.de/wit).

30th Cambridge Ophthalmological Symposium

The 30th Cambridge Ophthalmological Symposium entitled “The Ageing Macula” will be held on 13–15 September 2000 at St John’s College Cambridge. Chairman: Professor Alan Bird. Further details: COS Secretariat, Cambridge Conferences, The Lawn, 33 Church Street, Great Shelford, Cambridge CB23 6EL (tel: 01223 847446; fax: 01223 847456; email: b.ashworth@easynet.co.uk).
Ophthalmic Anesthesia Society—14th Annual Meeting

European Association for Vision and Eye Research (EVER)
The European Association for Vision and Eye Research (EVER) will be meeting on 4–7 October 2000 in Palma de Mallorca, Spain. Further details: Secretariat EVER, Postbus 74, B3000 Leuven, Belgium (fax: +32 16 33 67 85; email: EVER@med.kuleuven.ac.be).

Fifth Annual Meeting of the Association for Ocular Pharmacology and Therapeutics
The Fifth Annual Meeting of the Association for Ocular Pharmacology and Therapeutics will be held on 2–5 November 2000 in Birmingham, AL, USA. Further details: Jimmy D Bartlett, OD, Department of Optometry, University of Alabama at Birmingham, 1716 University Blvd, Birmingham, AL 35294-0010, USA (tel: 205-934-6764; fax: 205-975-7052; email: jbartlett@icare.opt.uab.edu).

American Institute of Ultrasound in Medicine—Millennium Ultrasound Course Series
A course entitled “Obstetrical and Gynecological Ultrasound” will be held in New York City, NY, on 24–26 August 2001. Further details: Stacey Bessling, Public Relations Coordinator, AIUM, 14750 Sweitzer Lane, Suite 100, Laurel, MD 20707-5906, USA (tel: 301-498-4100; email: sbessling@aium.org).

Mind’s Eye 2—Psyche and Sight Loss

12th Afro-Asian Congress of Ophthalmology
The 12th Afro-Asian Congress of Ophthalmology (Official Congress for the Afro-Asian Council of Ophthalmology) will be held on 11–15 November 2000 in Guangzhou (Canton), China. The theme is “Advances of ophthalmology and the 21st century.” Further details: Professor Lezheng Wu, Zhongshan Eye Center, SUMS, New Building, Room 919, 54 Xianle Nan Road, Guangzhou 510060, PR China (tel: +86-20-8760 2402; fax: +86-20-8777 3370; email: wuizc@gzsums.edu.cn).

Singapore National Eye Centre 10th Anniversary International Congress
The Singapore National Eye Centre 10th Anniversary International Congress will be held in conjunction with 3rd World Eye Surgeons Society International Meeting on 2–4 December 2000 at the Shangri-La Hotel, Singapore. Further details: The Organising Secretariat, 11 Third Hospital Avenue, Singapore 168751 (tel: (65) 2277255; fax: (65) 2277290; internet: www.snecc.com.sg).

The Hong Kong Ophthalmological Symposium ’00
The Hong Kong Ophthalmological Symposium ’00 will be held 4–5 December 2000, in Hong Kong, China. Further information: Miss Vicki Wong, Room 802, 8/F Hong Kong Academy of Medicine, 99 Wong Chuk Hang Road, Aberdeen, Hong Kong (tel: (852) 2761 9128; fax: (852) 2715 0089; email: cohk@netvigator.com).

Contributors please note:
Communications from all countries except the UK and Republic of Ireland should be sent to Professor C Hoyt, Editor, British Journal of Ophthalmology, University of California, Department of Ophthalmology, 10 Kirkham Street, K 301, San Francisco, CA 94143-0730, USA (tel: 001 415 502-6871; fax: 001 415 514-1512).

Manuscripts from the UK and the Republic of Ireland should be sent to Professor Andrew Dick, UK Editor, British Journal of Ophthalmology, Division of Ophthalmology, University of Bristol, Lower Maudlin Street, Bristol BS1 2LY (tel: +44 (0)117 929-4496; fax: +44 (0)117 929-4607).

American Institute of Ultrasound in Medicine—Millennium Ultrasound Course Series
A course entitled “Obstetrical Ultrasound” will be held in Marina del Rey, CA, on 12–14 January 2001. Further details: Stacey Bessling, Public Relations Coordinator, AIUM, 14750 Sweitzer Lane, Suite 100, Laurel, MD 20707-5906, USA (tel: 301-498-4100; email: sbessling@aium.org).

Optometry Study Tour to Kenya, Tanzania, and Zanzibar
The tour offers a wonderful opportunity to optometrists and ophthalmologists to examine eye care in East Africa. It will take place from 28 January to 10 February. Further details: Master Travel, Croxted Mews, 288 Croxted Road, London SE24 9BY (tel: 0208 674 5320; fax: 0208 674 2712; email: tours@mastertravel.co.uk).

American Institute of Ultrasound in Medicine—Millennium Ultrasound Course Series
A course entitled “Obstetrical and Gynecological Ultrasound” will be held in New York City, NY, on 24–26 August 2001. Further details: Stacey Bessling, Public Relations Coordinator, AIUM, 14750 Sweitzer Lane, Suite 100, Laurel, MD 20707-5906, USA (tel: 301-498-4100; email: sbessling@aium.org).