BOOK NOTICES


In the introduction to this excellent little volume Sir John Parsons writes as follows: "The mathematical aspect of physical facts appears to be peculiarly repulsive to minds which find their chief interest in biological affairs." Students of ophthalmology are essentially biologists, and in consequence view the eye rather from the physiological than from the mathematical aspect. In the book under review Mr. Goulden has succeeded to a remarkable degree in making the subject matter clear to the students of ophthalmology by introducing, as far as it is possible, the method of geometrical demonstration by the use of clear and concise diagrams, and by the employment, in the simpler forms only, of mathematical explanations.

In a few instances the reference in the text to particular diagrams is not explicit, and there are one or two points which are not quite clearly expressed. There is no doubt, however, that a second edition will be required, and that, on revision, the few defects in the present edition will be made good.

The chapter which deals with the ophthalmoscope, and its use by the direct and by the indirect method, is exceedingly well written. The illustrations are clear and accurate.

The chapter on retinoscopy is particularly good, and explains the science, as well as the art of refraction.

For those students who are reading for a degree or for a diploma in ophthalmology the present book is indispensable.

To those who practise the science, as well as the art, of ophthalmic medicine and surgery, a careful study of this book is strongly recommended, for it is felt that the practical application of the facts so admirably set down will improve the practice of ophthalmology generally, and will be of great assistance to those practitioners who prescribe spectacle lenses.


The slit-lamp and corneal microscope are rapidly passing into the routine of practice, but there are very few reliable books which may be recommended as handbooks to anyone who may wish to become conversant with the technique of the apparatus. There is one large German work which is not easy reading and
which treats, in great detail, the theoretical side of the slit-lamp, but so far as we know there is only one work in English, the translation of the Atlas of Vogt, which although indispensable, does not take the learner by the hand and introduce him to the instrument and explain in detail its structure and the method of its arrangement and use.

This important book by Dr. Koby is exactly the book required by the learner. He is a very lucid writer, and his work, as he says in his preface: "Is not to replace, but condense and rather complete the fine Atlas of Vogt." He draws attention to the fact that nearly all the publications, by force of circumstances, are in the German language, as the development of the slit-lamp has been largely the work of Swiss investigators (mostly pupils of Vogt) and German surgeons.

The first chapter of this work gives a detailed description of the apparatus, the path of the luminous rays and the optical properties of the luminous beam projected by the lamp in the two methods in which it may be arranged, that of Gullstrand and that of Vogt. Then follows a description of the Zeiss model and later the beautiful Birkhaeuser-Streit instrument.

In the second chapter there is a detailed explanation of the various methods of examination, focal illumination, trans-illumination, specular reflection and indirect illumination. These are well expounded, and the student will appreciate early that, besides improving our method of examination in focal light, the slit-lamp has introduced other methods of examination which were not previously available. In the section dealing with localization in depth, besides mentioning and explaining those methods already in use, focusing of the microscope, optical section, and mirror zones, Dr. Koby explains the use of projected shadows, which he has recently elaborated in a paper reviewed in the February number of this journal.

Then there follows a description of preliminary exercises which the beginner should practise with the instrument and the enucleated eyes of animals, from which much be learnt.

The third chapter is a description of the phenomena of reflection of light by the media of the eye. This is a most important chapter since an appreciation of its contents will help the student to understand the use made of the zone of specular reflection when examining the posterior endothelium of the cornea and the importance of the lustre of the capsule of the lens in diagnosing the various types of cataract.

After these preliminary chapters which take up the first seventy-two pages of the book, we pass to a description of the various appearances found in those parts of the eye that are readily accessible to the slit-lamp and binocular microscope.

All the chapters, of which one each is devoted to conjunctiva,
cornea, anterior chamber, iris, lens and vitreous, respectively, are arranged upon one plan and this makes reading easier, and tends to impress upon the memory the various abnormal conditions likely to be encountered. Thus we find each structure described under the following headings: First of all the technique peculiar to the part, then the normal appearance, congenital abnormalities, senile modifications, traumatic lesions, pathological changes. In spite of some overlapping and also some apparent inconsistencies, this plan seems to be a good one. One of the most valuable features of the book is a complete bibliography of the subject. Dr. Koby had the advantage of acting as first assistant to Vogt when he removed to Basle. He has thus been a close student of this subject since its early days, and he has an unrivalled knowledge of the literature. The illustrations have been prepared by the author himself, several of them are photographs explaining the qualities of the luminous beam, and all are clear and almost self-explanatory. This is a book which must be in the hands of all students of the slit-lamp, and Dr. Koby is to be congratulated on the successful way in which he has performed his task.

Die Tuberkulose des Auges. By Dr. Arnold Löwenstein.


The sub-title of this book is "A Manual for the General Practitioner and the Ophthalmic Surgeon," and as such its purpose is not to set forth original ideas, or the result of original work on the part of the author, but to give a concise summary of the publications of those who have devoted special attention to the subject.

It is divided into two sections, the first of which deals with the clinical aspects and pathology of the various manifestations, and the second with their treatment.

In the first section the different parts of the eye are dealt with in turn, and the author has included those diseases the tuberculous nature of which is controversial, as well as those which are undoubtedly caused by the tubercle bacillus. It is noteworthy that he regards the origin of recurrent vitreous haemorrhages in young people, from retinal veins affected by tuberculous peri-vasculitis as sufficiently established (mainly by the work of Axenfeld and Stock) to warrant the inclusion of this affection in the latter class.

The greater part of the therapeutic section is devoted to treatment with tuberculin in its various forms, and here the author cites his own experiences, as well as those of many other authorities. Treatment of the lids and conjunctiva by radium, X-rays, and light, is described, and an account is given of Koppe's
work on the treatment of intraocular affections, chiefly iridocyclitis, by means of specially filtered rays from an arc lamp.

As a work of reference the book will be most useful, and its value in this respect is greatly enhanced by an excellent bibliography.

CORRESPONDENCE

To the Editor of The British Journal of Ophthalmology

Dear Sir,—A number of years ago an article appeared in an English or American journal dealing with the pharmacology of mydriatic alkaloids, and especially, I think, with atropin and the varying action of different samples. Being at the moment much interested in the last-named subject, namely, the possibility of varying therapeutic action, I shall be greatly indebted to any reader who can help me to find the article in question. I was under the impression that it had appeared in the Lancet, but the Editor of that journal has kindly searched his indices for the ten years, 1907 to 1917, without success. These seem the most probable years but it is possible I am wrong in my estimate of the period.

Yours faithfully,

33, Snowdon Place, Stirling.  
March 9, 1925.

ERNEST THOMSON.

OBITUARY NOTICE


Richard Williams was born in Anglesey in 1845 and died on Friday, February 20, at his residence, Pen-Bre, Upper Bangor. He qualified in 1870 (after acting as H.S. at the Carmarthen Infirmary he studied ophthalmology in London and Paris), and retired from active practice in 1924, a period of fifty-four years. About thirty-seven years of this were spent in Liverpool as Assistant Surgeon and Surgeon to the Liverpool Eye and Ear Infirmary and Ophthalmic and Aural Surgeon to the Royal Albert Edward Infirmary, Wigan. He left Liverpool in 1910 and continued to practise as an Ophthalmic Surgeon at Bangor, North Wales, until within a few months of his death.

During the most active period of his career Williams held office as President of the Wigan Medical Society and of the North Wales Branch of the British Medical Association, and Vice-President of the Liverpool Medical Institution and of the Ophthal-