

Review

General Ophthalmology

Edited by Daniel Vaughan, Taylor Asbury, and Khalid F. Tabbara. Ed 12. Pp 460, with illus. Appleton & Lange, 25 Van Zant Street, East Norwalk, CT 06855, 1989, \$27.50 (paper).

For those physicians unfamiliar with prior editions, *General Ophthalmology* has been a staple in the study of the eye for medical students, ophthalmology residents, optometrists, and general practitioners. The current edition contains some relatively updated information on topics ranging from lasers in ophthalmology to the acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS). Several of the chapters have either been revised or completely rewritten. References have been updated to 1988. Written by different authors, the chapters have an unequal quality about them. Yet, overall, they constitute an important resource for expert information on a particular subject.

For the nonophthalmologist, a section on eye examination nicely reviews and explains the topic. This section features a written

text and illustrations of the myriad of highly specialized instruments needed to perform an eye examination. Although the non-specialist may not use many of these procedures and ophthalmologic instruments, this chapter correctly emphasizes the complexity of performing an adequate eye examination. Unfortunately, the simple pinhole test, which can be readily administered in any hospital or office setting, is not even mentioned.

The revised chapter on neuro-ophthalmology includes some good quality magnetic resonance imaging and computed tomography scan photographs. Common neuro-ophthalmologic disorders are covered here, including optic neuritis, ischemic optic neuropathy, pituitary tumors, and myasthenia gravis.

Presented in logical sequence, the material at times is a little too concise in covering some areas. For instance, the section on papilledema does not discuss pseudotumor cerebri. Yet, the more rare Foster Kennedy syndrome is defined. Similarly, the section discussing nystagmus presents a rather brief explanation of the various pathologic states, and spasmus nutans—head nodding, torticollis, and nystagmus.

In a book primarily designed for practitioners who do not deal with day-to-day eye conditions such as this one, some chapters of minimal value are bound to be included. Chapters detailing low vision, optics, and refraction fall into that category.

Some helpful tables have been included. These can be used as a quick reference for common problems, such as conjunctivitis and dry eye syndrome. The physician can use the information contained throughout the 27 chapters and three appendices to formulate a convenient one- or two-line explanation of a specific condition for the patient. Also included is a glossary covering most of the common terms and a listing of abbreviations and symbols used in ophthalmology.

Practicing ophthalmologists and senior ophthalmology residents will want their own plenary references. However, this book should be a useful, compact guide to general ophthalmology, particularly for the beginning ophthalmology resident as well as the general practitioner.

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