

Book Reviews

Stallard's Eye Surgery—Seventh Edition.
M. J. Roper-Hall. Wright, London.

The wise surgeon, like the good painter, understands that, although he may eventually come to view his work as the expression of great individuality, his results are only made possible through the earlier mastery and subsequent application of many basic technical skills. H. B. Stallard's great gift to ophthalmic surgery was that, in writing this textbook, he was able to describe his individual skills in such a way that an aspiring surgeon could learn not only how to carry out an operation but also gain insight into the fundamentals of his craft. In this seventh edition, Michael Roper-Hall has preserved the legacy of earlier editions, albeit in the context of the many advances of recent years. It is a comprehensive work, containing nearly 450 pages of extensively revised text and excellent illustrations, the majority of which are new to this edition. Each chapter contains not only detailed descriptions of operative procedures but includes at the start sections on the relevant surgical anatomy and general principles of technique. It will be of value to the established surgeon who wishes both to refamiliarise himself with less commonly performed operations and to keep abreast of recent developments. The surgeon in training can enlarge his surgical repertoire and find methods of dealing with previously unencountered problems. Those embarking on a career in ophthalmic surgery will find much useful background information, particularly in the introductory chapters which will prepare them equally well for the future challenges of the operating theatre and the examination hall. Thus, it is a book for both teacher and pupil and should retain its

place as a standard work in the field of ophthalmic surgery.

P. A. Hunter

Basic Refraction Techniques David D. Michaels. Raven Press, New York.

This is a manual of practical refraction for the absolute beginner. It describes the actions necessary to refract a patient in the consulting room with a superficial explanation of the underlying principles of optics and refraction. The last chapter consists of brief paragraphs telling the ignorant refractionist what to do if the patient does not like his glasses, but only in terms of practical manoeuvres. For example, intolerance of bifocals is dealt with in terms of the patient being unsuitable for bifocals or changing the segment size or type. However, nowhere in the book is there a description of multifocal lenses, their optical properties and the problems associated with them.

The text is in very large print, N12 equivalent, (so that the beginner can refer to it in the dim light of the consulting room?). In contrast, many of the diagrams tend to be relatively small with crowded lines.

In short, a layman could plausibly conduct a simple sight test after reading this book but without sound understanding of the subject. Mercifully, sight testing is still the province of the qualified ophthalmologist and optometrist according to the law of this country. The information contained in this book would not begin to satisfy the requirements of the professional examining boards in the United Kingdom and I cannot recommend it to our junior staff.

H. J. Frank.