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J. Ringland Anderson

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# DETACHMENT OF THE RETINA

A CONTRIBUTION TO THE STUDY OF ITS CAUSATION  
AND TREATMENT

by

J. RINGLAND ANDERSON

M.C., M.B., B.S. (Melb.), F.R.C.S. (Edin.), F.C.S.A., D.O.M.S. (Lond.)

*Ophthalmic Surgeon to the Alfred Hospital, Melbourne*

WITH A FOREWORD BY

SIR JOHN HERBERT PARSONS

C.B.E., D.Sc., F.R.C.S., F.R.S.



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*To*

MY TEACHERS

SIR JOHN HERBERT PARSONS

&

J. HERBERT FISHER

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## FOREWORD

THE vast increase of knowledge in every branch of science in recent times has of necessity impelled the division of labour to the extremes of specialism. Life is too short, even if mental capacity sufficed, to embrace all the accumulated facts of any one of the branches into which science has been conveniently, if unscientifically, divided. It is no longer possible even for the ophthalmologist to speak authoritatively on every aspect of his already restricted subject. One individual may efficiently write a student's manual or even a more comprehensive textbook; but the inquisitive searcher after detail will often find that he must have recourse to original papers in journals and the transactions of learned societies in order to satisfy his curiosity. Hence the need of larger encyclopaedias of composite authorship. More satisfying than these, however, are monographs, which gather together all the salient facts and theories of a sharply delimited universe of discourse and provide the research worker and others with a bibliography and critical apparatus, the foundations and sources of exhaustive knowledge.

Such a monograph is this by Dr Anderson on Detachment of the Retina. It embodies all the facts and theories relating to the subject, and discusses them with insight and good judgment, founded upon knowledge derived from patient research. It is only by a fortunate chance that empirical methods are successful in the treatment of a disease of unknown origin. It is only when the pathogenesis of the condition is understood that truly scientific treatment can be applied. Hitherto the pathogenesis of simple detachment of the retina has been to all intents and purposes unknown; and it must yet remain a subject of speculation until the physiology of the eye and its intraocular pressure has been further elucidated. The last few years have seen most encouraging signs of improved knowledge in this direction due to advances in biophysics and biochemistry. But there is a long road yet to traverse.

Meantime a ray of hope for sufferers from the disease under consideration has been afforded by a mode of treatment which is in its origin almost entirely empirical, but which fortunately in suitable cases is followed by an encouraging degree of success.

Dr Anderson's monograph is exhaustive and reliable. It is likely long to remain the chief source of information on Detachment of the Retina.

In conclusion I cannot refrain from expressing the hope that his example may be followed by many others who have time for laborious work of this nature; for such work confers a great boon upon their confrères.

J. HERBERT PARSONS

## INTRODUCTION

CONSCIOUS of failure and yet encouraged by some slight success in the treatment of retinal detachment, the author has made an endeavour to study the literature. If the publication of his findings facilitates the approach of others to this subject, it will not have been in vain.

Though it is still too early finally to judge the merits of Professor Jules Gonin's theory and method of treatment, yet so many of his published results are triumphs compared with all previous ones that one anticipates a great step forward as a result of his brilliant and painstaking work. For this reason the present appeared an opportune time to make this publication.

The author has borrowed much from the published works of others, especially from the writings of Sir John Parsons, and from the Graefe-Saemisch-Hess Handbook. Of recent works, the many papers by Professor Alfred Vogt and Dr W. S. Duke-Elder have been of the greatest assistance. Anything of value in this book is solely due to such borrowings. It is hoped that easier access to views expressed in many journals and in diverse languages will be given through this book to those in busy practice. That the author is one of these is his excuse for the many deficiencies and the obvious defects in this publication.

I would like to place on record my gratitude to Sir John Parsons for his courtesy in honouring so small a contribution to ophthalmic literature by writing the Foreword to this book. Without his influence, and that of Mr J. Herbert Fisher, this book would not have been undertaken. To Miss McNab for skill and patience in typing, and to Miss Coverlid and Miss Gault for their help in translating lengthy German articles I am most grateful.

I must thank the Director of the Baker Institute, Dr W. J. Penfold, for providing the material necessary for experimental work, and Mr Edward Burt, a keen and efficient co-worker in any laboratory investigation.

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## INTRODUCTION

Professor Vogt has been kind enough to permit me to reproduce some of his excellent illustrations. These are referred to in the text, and I am greatly beholden to him for his courtesy.

I must thank Dr T. àB. Travers for the help that he has given so willingly in the experimental work that initiated a thorough search of the literature, and in many other ways during the publication of this book.

J. R. A.