Excellency Shaheen Pacha, under whose supreme direction the ophthalmic organisation rests, while the Director of the Hospitals, Dr. I. H. Bey Maziny carries on with admirable zeal the traditions to which he succeeded.

CORRESPONDENCE

To the Editors of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF OPHTHALMOLOGY.

DEAR SIRS,—A form of Certification of the Blind has recently come into use. It covers four foolscap pages, and it is probable that every practising ophthalmic surgeon must have met this form. It contains very numerous questions in a laudable endeavour to collect information which will furnish the basis for statistics as to the relative frequency of the causes of blindness.

I have three serious criticisms against this form. (1) In a large number of cases the certifying surgeon is quite ignorant of the previous history of the case he is asked to certify, and is so unable to give the information required. (2) It would take a very long examination—extending over some days—if the questions asked are to be properly answered. (The alternative being “Don’t know.”) (3) Assuming that previous knowledge of the case were available, statistics collected in this method would be very misleading for this one reason—that they would be based only on cases where both eyes were blind, leaving out of count the far more numerous cases with one blind eye. It is evident that these cases must be included.

I suggest that certification should be restricted to the simple statement that the person is or is not blind within the meaning of the Act. This would safeguard the Societies for the Care of the Blind against imposition.

As regards the collection of information, we have the precedent of notification. It could be enacted that blindness occurring in any one eye should be notified by the surgeon under whose care the patient happened to be at the time that the eye was deemed to have become blind. The form for such notification should be carefully drafted, special care being taken to make it as simple as is consistent with obtaining the desired information.

Yours truly,

ARTHUR ZORAB.