MYOPIA IN AN INFANT

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In January, 1921, an infant fourteen days old was sent to me, with a history of birth after a difficult labour necessitating instrumental delivery.

On the eyes being opened a left convergent strabismus was noticed by the doctor in attendance.

On examining the baby I found a marked left convergent strabismus, apparently resulting from paralysis of the left external rectus, as although the baby followed a light readily, it did not bring the left eye past the middle line. There was also some paresis of the right external rectus. On examining the fundus, which proved to be normal in each eye, I found there was a considerable degree of myopia, and ascertained by retinoscopy that there were ten dioptres of myopia in each eye.

I saw the child about six weeks later, when the movement of the right external rectus was normal, and there was some movement of the left external rectus also, the parents stating that at times the squint was scarcely noticeable.

I again worked out the refraction with the same result. The eyes appeared to be normal in size, and the corneas and anterior chambers presented no unusual feature, so that it is improbable that it is a case of commencing buphthalmos.

ANNOTATIONS

Some Phases of Quackery in relation to Diseases of the Eye

Mr. Cyril H. Walker, in his Presidential Address at the opening of the Forty-eighth Meeting of the Bristol Medico-Chirurgical Society, drew attention to the fact that no branch of medicine has been and probably is more invaded by advertising charlatans than ophthalmology. The term “quack” or “quack-salver” came into common use in the reign of Charles I., and referred to the noisy chatter of medicine vendors at fairs. Recently a quack has been defined as a man who is more interested in himself than in his healing art, caring more for his patent than his patient. One might almost substitute the word “pocket” for “patent.” During the middle ages the treatment of disease of the eye was largely in the hands of these itinerant quacks who went from fair to fair couching cataracts and selling their preparations. It is also of interest to know that the still popular Singleton’s golden eye ointment was in vogue over three hundred years ago and sold at fairs by these quacks. In James I’s reign these quacks first
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