The Council presents its report for the session 1926-1927.

At the first meeting of the session the following officers were elected:— President : Mr. J. Herbert Fisher; Vice-Presidents: Sir George Berry, M.P. and Sir John Parsons; Hon. Treasurer : Mr. M. S. Mayou; Hon. Secretary : Mr. W. H. McMullen.

The following members were appointed to serve on the Executive Committee: Mr. E. Treacher Collins, Sir John Parsons, Mr. M. S. Mayou, Mr. F. A. Juler, with the President and Secretary ex-officio.

The arrangements made by approved societies for provision of ophthalmic benefit have continued to engage the attention of the Council. It regrets to note that only a few of these societies have adopted the full scheme for the provision of ophthalmic benefit approved by the Ministry of Health. The majority of the societies provide an examination by an ophthalmic surgeon only after the member has been examined by an optician. The policy adopted by hospitals with regard to the treatment of insured persons is of great importance in relation to this question. In order to obtain information on this subject a sub-committee was appointed to make inquiries. A report based upon the information so obtained has been passed by the Council and will be published at an early date. This subject has also been under the consideration of the British Medical Association, and the Council has endeavoured to make arrangements for effective joint action with that body, but so far without success.

The Council having learnt that a Bill for the Registration of Sight-Testing Opticians, promoted by the Joint Council of Qualified Opticians, is to be introduced in Parliament at an early date, sent to each of the members of Parliament officially supporting the Bill a copy of the Council’s report on Sight-Testing by Opticians. The Council also communicated with the General Medical Council and was informed that that body had the matter already under its consideration. The Minister of Health has appointed a Departmental Committee to examine the Bill, and Mr. E. Treacher Collins, late President of this Council is a member of the Committee.

The Council desires to thank the National Committee for the Prevention of Blindness (U.S.A.) for copies of its publications.

Committees are engaged on the following subjects:
(1) An inquiry as to how far the recommendations of the Departmental Committee on the Causes and Prevention of Blind.
ness with reference to ophthalmia neonatorum have been put into practice.

(2) An inquiry as to what effect has been given to the recommendations of the Departmental Committee on the Causes and Prevention of Blindness in respect of industrial eye diseases and accidents.

(3) On the Standardization of Test Types.

The last-named Committee is awaiting the publication of the results of investigations with regard to types at present being carried out under the direction of the Medical Research Council.

The expenses of the Council have been defrayed as in former years by its members.

The Council desires to thank the Council of the Royal Society of Medicine for the use of rooms for meetings.

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Interim Report on the Treatment of Insured Persons at Hospitals since the adoption of the Scheme for Provision of Ophthalmic Benefit

A few approved societies have adopted the full scheme for provision of ophthalmic benefit agreed upon by the Ministry of Health and the Joint Committee of the Council of British Ophthalmologists, the British Medical Association and the Ophthalmic Benefit Committee. Under this scheme a member should obtain a certificate from his panel practitioner, stating that he requires examination by an ophthalmic surgeon; this certificate is to be presented to his society, from which a letter can be obtained entitling him to see an ophthalmic surgeon for a fee of one guinea, which will be paid by the society.

Most of the societies will not issue this letter unless the patient has been seen by an optician, who will examine his eyes and either supply glasses, or report that an examination by an ophthalmic surgeon is necessary.

It necessarily follows that if members of approved societies providing ophthalmic benefit are referred back from hospitals to their panel practitioners they will probably receive treatment by an optician only.

As far as the information at the disposal of the Council goes it is able to report as follows:

(a) At all hospitals all urgent cases are dealt with.

(b) At all hospitals patients who present themselves with letters from approved societies entitling them to full ophthalmic benefit are referred to an ophthalmic surgeon.

(c) At the Royal Eye Hospital all insured patients are given an explanatory leaflet and none but urgent cases are treated.
At the Royal London Ophthalmic Hospital the almoner has a list of 249 societies which profess to give ophthalmic benefit, and members of these societies are not treated unless they are urgent cases. The surgeons decide as to whether cases are urgent or not.

At the Royal Westminster and Central London Ophthalmic Hospitals insured patients are treated as ordinary cases except as under (b).

Similarly diverse methods of procedure obtain in the Provincial Hospitals, some referring back members of approved societies, others treating them in the ordinary way.

Recommendations

1. That every hospital keep a list as complete as possible of societies providing full ophthalmic benefit (vide first paragraph of this report) in order that the registration clerk or other officer may readily ascertain whether insured patients are entitled to such benefit.

2. That patients entitled to full ophthalmic benefit be given a printed slip explaining how it may be obtained through their societies and be referred to their panel doctors.

3. That notices be displayed in out-patient waiting halls calling attention to the provision of ophthalmic benefit by some societies, and advising insured patients to apply to the registration clerk or other officer of the hospital for information.

THE ANNUAL CONGRESS OF THE OPHTHALMOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF THE UNITED KINGDOM, 1927

The Ophthalmological Society of the United Kingdom held its Annual Congress this year, at Liverpool, on April 28, 29, and 30, under the presidency of Sir John H. Parsons. The proceedings were opened by the Lord Mayor of the city, Councillor F. C. Bowring, who also entertained the delegates to luncheon. In addition to a full scientific programme, and a well-organized clinical meeting, the social aspects of the Congress were well catered for, and an ophthalmological museum was provided by the good offices of Mr. Chavasse. The Edward Nettleship Medal for 1927 was presented to Mr. C. H. Usher of Aberdeen, the president-elect for the coming year, for his extensive investigations into the hereditary transmission of ocular diseases.

A full account of the papers and discussions will be published in the Transactions of the Society; merely an indication of the subjects of debate is given here.