Itinerary of Archbishop Baldwin through Wales in 1188. It concerns St. Kenelm, son of Kenuf, King of Mercia, and his sister, Quindreda.

"What miraculous power hath not in our days been displayed by the psalter of Quindreda, sister of St. Kenelm, by whose instigation he was killed? On the vigil of the Saint, when according to custom great multitudes of women resorted to the feast at Winchelcumbe (Winchcombe), the under butler of that convent had carnal knowledge of one of them within the precincts of the monastery. This same man on the following day had the audacity to carry the psalter in the procession of the relics of the saints; and on his return to the choir, after the solemnity, the psalter stuck to his hands. Astonished and greatly confounded, and at length calling to mind his crime on the preceding day, he made confession, and underwent penance; and being assisted by the prayers of the brotherhood, and having shown signs of sincere contrition, he was at length liberated from the miraculous bond. That book was held in great veneration, because when the body of St. Kenelm was carried forth, and the multitude cried out: 'He is the martyr of God; truly he is the martyr of God'; Quindreda, conscious and guilty of the murder of her brother, answered, 'He is as truly the martyr of God, as it is true that my eyes be on that psalter'; for as she was reading the psalter, both her eyes were miraculously torn from her head, and fell on the book, where the marks of the blood yet remain.'

This is, we think, the most remarkable case on record of double evulsion.

COUNCIL OF BRITISH OPHTHALMOLOGISTS

Medical Certificates of Blindness for Persons applying at Voluntary Hospitals

In the Brit. Jl. of Ophthal., Sept., 1927, see p. 98, the Council of British Ophthalmologists published a statement drawn up by the Lady Almoner of Moorfields Eye Hospital on this subject.

The attention of the Council has since been drawn to certain points in that statement which have proved misleading, and, in response to further inquiries the Ministry of Health has supplied a declaration on the present position.

From the information contained in the last paragraph it appears that the voluntary agencies for the blind and the local authorities have power to remunerate an ophthalmic surgeon for providing a medical certificate of blindness.
The statement supplied by the Ministry of Health is as follows:

17th December, 1927.

In connection with arrangements for the welfare of the blind in England and Wales medical certificates of blindness may be required for the following purposes:

1. To support a claim for a pension under the Blind Persons Act, 1920.
2. To support an application in respect of a blind person by a local authority or voluntary agency for grant out of public funds under the Regulations, for grant for the Welfare of the Blind, or under the Education Act.
3. To obtain evidence of blindness before the registration of a blind person.
4. To support an application for assistance to a voluntary agency by a blind person in respect of whom no grant out of public funds is payable.

1. A claimant for a pension under the Blind Persons Act must apply to the Local Pensions Committee and satisfy the Committee that he is "so blind as to be unable to perform any work for which eyesight is essential." The claim is usually supported by a medical certificate, though this is not a requirement, or by a certificate from an approved Voluntary Agency for the Blind to the effect that the claimant is known to them as a blind person. If the evidence is regarded by the Committee as unsatisfactory the claim is rejected, and it is then open to the claimant to appeal to the Minister. On the other hand, if the Committee allow the claim on evidence which is considered unsatisfactory by the Pensions Officer, he will appeal to the Minister of Health. If the Minister, in considering an appeal, either by the applicant or the Pensions Officer, deems the evidence of blindness submitted to be sufficient to establish the claim, the claim is allowed. If not, the case is referred by the Minister to the Local Regional Medical Officer for examination. If the case appears to be one of special difficulty it may be referred, with or without previous reference to the Regional Medical Officer, to an ophthalmic surgeon for examination and report, and a fee for this service is paid by the Exchequer.

The appeals are dealt with as expeditiously as possible and, should the claim be allowed, the pension of the successful claimant is paid as from the date of his application.

2. Certificates are required by local authorities or voluntary agencies to substantiate a claim for an Exchequer grant in respect of a blind person under the Regulations governing grants for the Welfare of the Blind. For example, a grant of £20 per head is payable in respect of each approved worker in a workshop for the blind and for each approved home-worker, and grants are also payable in respect of blind persons in homes and hostels and of blind persons under training. The Minister of Health (or, in the case of blind persons under training, the Board of Education) requires to be satisfied as to the fact of blindness before paying grant, and it is for the authority or agency claiming the grant to furnish the necessary evidence.
(3) The schemes made under the Blind Persons Act, 1920, require each local authority to keep, or to arrange for a voluntary agency to keep on their behalf, a register of the blind in their area. These local authorities are the 62 County Councils, the 83 County Boroughs and the Common Council of the City of London. Before registering a person as blind the registering authority must establish the fact of blindness and a satisfactory medical certificate is required for this purpose.

(4) A voluntary agency may require a certificate for purposes other than claiming an Exchequer grant or registering a person as blind.

I am to add that local authorities and voluntary agencies can incur reasonable expenses in obtaining such medical certificates of blindness as are necessary for their work under headings (2), (3), and (4) above. With regard to the Exchequer grants for the Welfare of the Blind, while they are assessed and distributed on a per capita basis for specific services, the amounts, when received by the voluntary agencies, may be applied for any legitimate purpose of the agencies. The contributions made by local authorities to the funds of voluntary agencies may also be so applied except in the case of any contributions made for specific purposes.

ABSTRACTS

I.—TRACHOMA


(1) This experimental work on trachoma has already been referred to in the journal (Brit. Jl. of Ophthal., Vol. XI, p. 367). It was begun in May, 1926, when at the request of Dr. F. I. Proctor an expedition was made by Noguchi to New Mexico where a number of pupils in the government school for Indians were to receive surgical treatment. For the purposes of the experimental investigation several previously untreated typical cases of trachoma were selected. The five cases minutely studied were of from two to four years' standing and all the patients showed some scarring at the time of operation. They were examined a year later and the lesions were found to be still active.

The trachoma of the Indians is interesting in view of its high incidence, as shown by recent official surveys, and the probability that it has been endemic among them for a very long time. It seemed not impossible that it might not be exactly the same disease as that known as trachoma elsewhere.

Attempts were made (1) to transmit the disease to Macacus rhesus and anthropoid apes by direct inoculation of the pathological