BOOK NOTICES


This number of the Sight-Saving Review contains articles concerning the importance of social service and follow-up in preventing blindness, eye accidents in child play, illumination in industry, the conservation of vision and preventive work.

Hospitals without adequate social service departments are doing incomplete and inefficient work. Statistical studies in the New York Clinics demonstrate that many patients who have eye diseases which may result in blindness attend the clinic once only; of 198 such patients 103 made only a single visit for advice and treatment, and 81 per cent. of patients suffering from glaucoma came three times or less. The necessity for well-organized social service departments with adequate personnel for conducting follow-up work is obvious. It is also necessary in some instances to instruct the physician to use the social service department and that more follow-up work is needed to conserve the physician's time in making his records valuable for research and teaching, and to prevent blindness. The ophthalmologist must gain the confidence of his patient by his thoroughness, his personality and particularly his interest in the patient.

It is recommended that pamphlets dealing with the nature and treatment of such diseases as cataract, glaucoma, squint, conjunctivitis, myopia and syphilis should reinforce verbal instructions to patients. Social workers should receive information about the aetiology, course and prognosis of eye diseases likely to result in serious defects of vision and in their practice endeavour as far as possible to eliminate or modify the exciting causes of such diseases.

Eye accidents to children are probably more numerous than is generally believed. In the schools and classes of the United States there are 500 pupils whose blindness is due to accidents and about 70 are added each year. Two-thirds of the eye accidents to children are due to weapons such as air-rifles, slingshots, arrows, fireworks and explosives. The National Society for the Prevention of Blindness has strongly recommended that prohibitory legislation be put into force against the sale of such articles to children. There is a need for continued education of both children and adults concerning the hazards that are inherent in many objects utilized in child play.

In an article dealing with illumination and eyesight in industry...
it is stated that the Illuminating Engineering Society and American Standards Association have demonstrated that if a worker, because of good illumination, saves—in more production, better quality of product or decreased accidents—the equivalent of only three minutes per day for 300 days, he will offset the annual cost of illumination.

In this number there are other articles of interest which concern preventive work in sympathetic ophthalmitis and ophthalmia neonatorum; fourth of July accidents; notes; comments; current articles of interest and book reviews.


The hospital was founded in 1816 and established as "The Royal Westminster Infirmary for the Cure of Diseases of the Eye" in the western part of the Metropolis, for the relief of the poor and as a school of instruction. Originally the hospital was in Maryle-Bone Street, Piccadilly, later it was moved to Warwick Street, Golden Square, and in 1882 transferred to King William Street, West Street, Strand, where it stood till 1926. There is an account of the surgeons, beginning with the founder of the Hospital, George James Guthrie (1816) down to modern times.

There is also another historical article, "A fragment of history," which concerns the geography of St. Giles and Broad Street from the Middle ages through the Tudor and Stuart periods to Victorian days.

The remainder of the report contains a survey of the work done by the Hospital and its several departments, the Lady Almoner's report, balance sheets and a list of subscribers.


The first edition of Würdemann's work appeared in 1911. It represented the experience of the author during 22 years in a large manufacturing centre. This, the second edition, completes his 42 year's experience in ocular injuries. So far as we are aware, the last book to be published in England on this subject was
Maitland Ramsay's "Eye Injuries and their Treatment," which was published in 1907.

Würdemann claims that this edition is an exhaustive and authoritative work upon the subject, and this claim is certainly upheld by its perusal. The subject is presented mainly in its clinical and therapeutic aspects; it is essentially practical, but the subject of pathology has not been overlooked, enough of this being included to elucidate the text. No attempt has been made at a complete bibliography of the literature; only when the author's experience has not afforded illustrative cases has he given examples from the practice of others. For the most part the book is the result of a single surgeon's experience.

The book is arranged in three sections:—general injuries, injuries of the special structures of the eye and forensic medicine. Nothing seems to have been omitted, for the work includes a notice of the conjunctivitis occurring in those engaged in the manufacture of artificial silk, and an account of the recent work on ignipuncture in the treatment of retinal detachment; to name only a couple of examples of its thoroughness.

The wealth of illustrations adds greatly to its value; these include pictures of dangerous occupations such as a miner at work, and a collection of blacksmith's tools in bad repair; while those in connection with prophylaxis are especially valuable, such as the wire mesh guards on the water gauge for the protection of boiler men, a shield to prevent fragments flying from the lathe, goggles for furnace men and, in special instances, helmets.

The comparative rarity of eye injury from broken spectacles is noted and some illustrative cases appended. Abrasions during the administration of a general anaesthetic and traumatic neuroses after ocular injuries, including post-operative delirium are touched upon.

There is an excellent chapter on radiography in diagnosis, the author rightly emphasising the importance of having an X-ray, picture taken in all cases where the presence of a foreign body in the eye or orbit is a possible complication. His statement that "the slit-lamp is of no particular benefit in examining injury cases" is tempered, by the inclusion of a couple of slit-lamp illustrations of corneal injuries.

The final section on the medico-legal aspects of ophthalmic injuries is full of interest and should be read by all hospital surgeons. A chapter on "protective legislation, pensions and accident insurance" includes a summary of the Workman's Compensation Laws of the World, and contains some interesting examples of decisions in disputed cases. In the last chapter, on visual economics, an attempt is made to determine the relation to and amount of economic damage resulting from injuries to the eyes and vision.