advocated to relieve the constant strain on the eyes. Further, that children should not attend too frequently or stay too late. Another recommendation was that power should be given to close the cinema to children in times of epidemics.

As regards the lighting of cinema theatres, the Commission thought the recommendation made by the Secretary of the Illuminating Engineering Society to be reasonable, namely, that while the display was in progress it should be one-tenth of a foot-candle.

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**Ophthalmia Neonatorum**

The *News Letter* is the title of a periodical published five times a year by the National Committee for the Prevention of Blindness, 130, East 22nd Street, New York City, N.Y. The number for October, 1917 (which has recently reached us), contains a table giving statistics of ophthalmia neonatorum during 1916-1917 in thirty State schools for the blind throughout the United States. Briefly, among the 2,961 pupils in thirty State schools, 742, or 25 per cent., had been blinded by the disease; while as regards 558 new admissions, 109, or 19.5 per cent., were in similar case. Closer scrutiny of the figures shows curious differences in the schools belonging to different States. For example, in the Florida State school, those blinded by ophthalmia reach 51.1 per cent. of the total pupils, and in the New Mexico institution, 44.8 per cent.; whereas in the Montana, Virginia, and Nebraska schools, the figures are 7.6 per cent., 7.3 per cent., and 1.7 per cent. respectively. By means of another table it is shown that the proportion of pupils newly admitted to schools for the blind during the last ten years, blinded by ophthalmia neonatorum, has ranged from 26.5 per cent. (1907-8) to 15.1 per cent. (1914-15). With regard to the pupils in classes in the public school systems of six American cities, of 375 pupils, 54, or 14.4 per cent., were blinded by ophthalmia neonatorum; while of 89 admissions to those classes, 10, or 11.2 per cent., were rendered necessary by that disease.

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**“Collosol” Cocain**

Some few months ago (July, 1917, p. 440) we drew attention in these columns to a new product, “collosol” cocain, made by the Crookes Laboratories, London, and to its interesting possibilities in eye work. The other side of the question is now presented in the *Lancet* of December 1, 1917, by Messrs. G. Barger and H. H. Dale and Miss Florence M. Durham. Briefly, in the first communication it was claimed, apparently upon good evidence, that while retaining its anaesthetic action, “collosol” cocain has lost its general toxicity.
The present writers cannot confirm this view. In the samples they examined the toxicity, indeed, was low, but on the other hand, the anaesthetic action was correspondingly low. Both effects agreed satisfactorily with the proportion of cocain chemically recoverable from the solution. The writers furthermore declared that the cocain is not, as claimed, in colloidal solution, as shown by the fact that a sample filtered through a wet collodion membrane under a pressure of about 25 cm. of mercury. On the other hand, the colouring matter of the product was held back by the membrane, so that the resulting filtrate was colourless. The authors reached the following conclusions:—1. The local anaesthetic action of three samples of “collosol” cocain corresponded roughly with that of a 0.25 per cent. solution of pure cocain. In two other samples it was much lower. 2. The toxicity of the three better samples was about one quarter of that of 1 per cent. of cocain. 3. The quantity of cocain chemically recoverable from each of the three samples was approximately 0.24 per cent. instead of 1 per cent. as indicated. 4. The cocain which was present passed freely through a collodion membrane, and was therefore not in colloidal solution. Meanwhile the matter is not at an end. A letter appeared in the Lancet of December 15 last from Mr. Lewis Stroud, M.A., of the Crookes Laboratories, in which several of the statements of Dr. Dale and his colleagues are traversed.

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The Lucien Howe Prize Fund

The Committee in charge of the Lucien Howe Prize Fund of the Medical Society of the State of New York suggests the following as suitable subjects for essayists:

1. Renal permeability; its relation to the pathology and prognosis of diseases of the eye.
2. Describe the ocular changes, diagnosis, etc., of general paresis and tabes dorsalis, including peripheral and central lesions and the pathological conditions peculiar to each—with differentiation from lesions found in cerebro-spinal syphilis.
3. Give the effects of shell shock upon the optic nerve, as occurring in the present war.

The prize fund amounts to 100 dollars. Essays must be in the hands of Dr. Albert Vander Veer, chairman of the committee, at 28, Eagle-street, Albany, N.Y., not later than April 15, 1918.

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"Shell Shock"

Among the after-war problems presented to ophthalmic surgeons will be one which deals with army pensioners who have suffered or