

meditate devotion of the energies to the description and elucidation of some other rare diseases. It opens with a short introduction and historical survey, and then goes on to describe the author's original investigations, both clinical and histological, on 19 cases, 12 of which could be followed for some time. Full records of these are given towards the end of the book.

The author's conclusion as to aetiology is that keratoconjunctivitis sicca can be explained by intense diminution or abolition of secretion by the lacrimal gland, in consequence of which the conjunctiva itself is obliged to provide for the entire secretion of fluid. As a result of this, a chronic oedema arises which gradually leads to hydropic degeneration and atrophy of the epithelium. Sjögren regards the disease as incurable, but the translator, in an appendix, describes an ingenious method comprising obliteration of the canaliculi and instillation of artificial tears, which has given encouraging results.

Bruce Hamilton is to be congratulated on the excellence of his translation, and on his ingenuity in finding a means of alleviating the distressing symptoms of this disease. Praise is also due to the publishers for the excellence of their production.

CORRESPONDENCE

To the Editors of THE BRITISH JOURNAL OF OPHTHALMOLOGY.

DEAR SIRS,—In the annotations of June, 1944, you quite rightly point out that the N.O.B. will have enough medical practitioners on their rota to enable everyone to have an ophthalmic examination by a medical practitioner. Right from the beginning the policy of the N.O.B. was a great puzzle to me. When an insured person, in his doctor's opinion, needs an ophthalmic examination, he is supplied with a corresponding certificate. The doctor, of course, is entitled to mention the name of a particular ophthalmic surgeon or medical practitioner to be consulted by his patient, but I am under the impression that it is very rarely done.

With this certificate the patient goes to the nearest centre of the N.O.B. where a list of ophthalmic medical practitioners is shown to him and he decides on the favoured one.

Now the income of different medical practitioners under the N.O.B. varies from approximately twenty-five pounds per year up to about one thousand pounds per year. Who, therefore, drops the plums in the lap of the favoured few; the patient himself, the manager of the local N.O.B. centre, or his subordinate clerk? Are private instructions issued by headquarters to their branches? A simple scrutiny of the incomes of different practitioners would help to clear the mystery up.

Again, in a certain district, a large teaching hospital arranged with the Hospital Savings Association to have a special building erected as an ophthalmic clinic under the N.O.B. where all their patients were examined by the staff of the eye department of the same hospital. Not one of the local practitioners was included. "All the king's horses and all the king's men" as represented by the B.M.A. were unable to help. It was a private arrangement between the H.S.A. and the teaching hospital and the N.O.B. May I submit therefore that the policy of the N.O.B. ought to be strictly supervised by the Medical members only and that all "private arrangements" of official and unofficial kinds ought to be strictly eliminated as a canker in the heart of a supposedly learned and dignified profession.

I remain, Yours etc.,

N. PINES.

LONDON, June 6, 1944.

OBITUARY

JOHN ARCHIBALD VALENTINE

Mr. Harrison Butler writes:—

Within ten days death has removed from our midst two prominent Irishmen, first J. A. Valentine, and then R. J. Coulter. It was my good fortune to know them both and it is my sorrow to mourn their loss. I first met Valentine at the Oxford Congress. He was an almost constant attendant, and did much to enliven the proceedings by his native Irish wit, and buoyant good fellowship. He had a fund of amusing stories, but they never transgressed against the dictates of decency. At the meetings his remarks, always characterised by his *joie de vivre* and merry humour, were eminently practical and useful. Valentine enjoyed the blessing, to-day rare, of a cultured education. He had, at Trinity College, Dublin, a brilliant career in both classics and medicine. He held the degrees of B.A., M.D., B.M., B.Ch. and B.A.O. Dublin, in 1902. He was L.M. of the Rotunda Hospital, Dublin, and D.T.M. and H., Cambridge University. He was awarded the Haughton Clinical Medal in Medicine. He studied for some time in Vienna.

After qualification, Valentine, generally known to his intimates as "Archie," worked in the tea plantations of India where he gained a sound knowledge of tropical medicine, of ophthalmic work, and what was even more valuable, of men. In the last great war he served in Salonica, where his knowledge of malaria was of great value to the army.

After the peace he returned to Southsea and devoted himself solely to ophthalmology. He was surgeon to the Portsmouth and