When examined the vision was 6/9 in both eyes and there was bilateral optic atrophy. The Weil-Felix reaction was positive, and the Khan test negative. There was great depression of the periphery of the field of vision and the nature of the remaining central field will be seen. The shelving nature of the edge of the visual area is interesting, particularly as no change had occurred when the fields were examined two months later.

Discussion

The haemorrhages found in the subconjunctiva and retina probably arose from minute areas of vasculitis with damage to vessel walls and consequent leakage of blood. In the formation of the retinal haemorrhages some degree of back pressure was probably also a factor, for marked venous engorgement was found in some and many had some degree of back pressure on the retinal veins. The cause of this is doubtless the cerebral and meningeal congestion known to occur, and the papilloedema found in some can be similarly explained.

The optic atrophy and the associated loss of the visual periphery is interesting and its cause difficult to determine. The rapid and fairly complete initial loss, and the extent of recovery favours a toxic origin. The shelving nature of the edge of the seeing area suggested that some further recovery would have taken place, but, as remarked, no change was noted after an interval of two months.

In considering the optic atrophy, it is interesting that a considerable number of cases of scrub typhus develop a nerve deafness. It is odd that this nerve should be singled out, and, as in the case of the optic nerve, the cause may be a toxic one.

I have pleasure in thanking Major M. T. Parker, R.A.M.C., for his help in the pathological aspects of this disease, and make acknowledgment to the appropriate Army authorities for permission to publish these notes.

ANNOTATION

Word blindness

The paper published in our last issue on word blindness is of great interest, and the suggestions as to teaching a backward child to read most valuable. All of us have met with similar cases either at school or in after life. It is of course conceivable that the school boy, who dreads being put on to construe in class, may not have prepared his lesson beforehand, either through sheer laziness or from having been employed in some other more interesting occupation. In our own school days we were something of an authority on ex tempore improvisation in translating a Latin sentence,
generally with disastrous results. And in after life we have often relished W. S. Gilbert's lines in "Haunted."

... the horrible ghosts that school days scared:
If the classical ghost that Brutus dared
Was the ghost of his "Caesar" unprepared,
I'm sure I pity "Brutus."

A distinguished member of the profession once told the writer that in his own case he was very slow in learning to read and he was inclined to blame a ductless gland which was not functioning properly, and only took up its work after puberty. This might have accounted for the difficulties which William Dobbin experienced in mastering the Latin grammar. Though dull at Latin, at mathematics he was uncommonly quick. We believe that most of these cases of word blindness have no trouble with figures. Anyhow Dobbin lived to write his History of the Punjab, and the author of the paper has overcome his difficulties; but the writer of this note regrets that he has never been able to conquer his inability to translate a simple Latin sentence, or his propensity for making false quantities. And he doubts if a course of thyroid or other hormone would ever cure him.

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FACULTY OF OPHTHALMOLOGISTS

Meetings between representatives of the Council of the Faculty, the Council of the Association of British Ophthalmologists and the Council of the Ophthalmic Group Committee (British Medical Association) have been held. Agreement has been reached regarding the constitution of the Faculty, including new criteria for membership and associateship, and revised arrangements for the election of Council. For the original statement on the formation of the Faculty, reference should be made to the British Journal of Ophthalmology of February, 1945, to the British Medical Journal of February 3, 1945, or to the Lancet of February 3, 1945. As a result of this agreement the Council of the Association of British Ophthalmologists were enabled to urge all their members to join the Faculty and to approve the dissolution of the Association in order that it may be merged into the Faculty. A postal ballot of members of the Association has revealed the necessary majority in favour of dissolution. A new Council of the Faculty is to be elected after due time has been allowed for all, includine serving ophthalmologists, to join the Faculty; in the meantime any applications for membership or associateship which present any doubt are to be scrutinised by a joint Committee representing the Council of the Association of British Ophthalmologists and the present Council of the Faculty.

The following are the new criteria: