Eyestrain in Cinemas

The interim report of the joint committee appointed by the Illuminating Engineering Society last year, recently published in the journal of that Society, is noteworthy in that it is the result of investigations by a committee composed of representatives of Engineering, Ophthalmology, Physiology, the London County Council (Public Health, Education, and Fire Departments), and the Cinema Industry.

The recommendations contained in the report (see p. 482) are the result of critical examination of the conditions actually existing in cinema halls in London visited by members of the committee. The point to which attention has been primarily directed is the angle of elevation of the screen seen from seats in the front part of the hall.

It has for long been recognized that eyeache and headache are frequently induced by prolonged observation of pictures and other objects at a level much above that of the observer. Hence the proximity of seats to the screen and the height of the screen are matters of importance. The Committee's judgment that the angle of elevation should not exceed $35^\circ$, is one that entails no practical difficulties and one which it is to be hoped will be made obligatory in halls in which, at the present time, this condition does not obtain.

The practical and common-sense recommendations and suggestions of the Committee deserve, and, we trust, will obtain the careful consideration of those concerned in the construction and lighting of new cinema theatres.

The result of the further labours of the Committee will be awaited with interest.

"Suspended Journals"

There is an element of sly malice underlying an editorial dealing with "suspended journals," recently published by the American Journal of Ophthalmology. From the note by our contemporary it appears that in its issue of May-June, 1918, the Centralblatt f. praktische Augenheilkunde, referring to the consolidation of ophthalmic journals that had taken place during the war, rehearsed with evident pride the list of seven German periodicals devoted to ophthalmology, of which all were in existence. The Centralblatt itself, however, ceased publication with the issue of the December,
1919, number. We also note that that most useful publication, Michel's (once Nagel's) *Jahresbericht*, has ceased to exist. At the close of the war it was announced that a single volume covering the period of the war was in preparation.

**Help for the Blind**

The text of the Government Bill to promote the welfare of blind persons, which came into operation on September 10, 1920, deserves universal approval. Its chief provision is that every blind person who has attained the age of 50 shall be entitled to such pension as, under the Old Age Pensions Act, 1908 to 1919, he would be entitled to if he had reached the age of 70. But that is not all. County and Borough Councils are authorized to provide and to maintain or to contribute towards workshops, hostels, homes, or other places for the reception of the blind. With the approval of the Minister of Health, they may make such further arrangements for the welfare of blind persons as they may think fit. The measure applies to Scotland and to Ireland. Its short title will be "The Blind Persons Act, 1920."

In this connection it may be noted that a memorandum has been issued by the Board of Education dealing with the training of blind students. The chief object of the Board is to provide a link between the special school giving primary education, on the one hand, and the workshop, on the other. The Board is prepared materially to increase the grants it makes in aid of training institutions, and these and other grants mentioned in the memorandum will be retrospective as from April 1, 1919.

**INTERIM REPORT OF THE JOINT COMMITTEE APPOINTED BY THE ILLUMINATING ENGINEERING SOCIETY TO ENQUIRE INTO "EYE-STRAIN IN CINEMAS"**

This Committee was formed in response to a request conveyed to the Illuminating Engineering Society from the London County Council (April 28, 1919) for information as to possible causes of eye-strain in cinemas, and the best means of removing them, and in particular "The question of the strain on the eyes caused by the proximity of seats to the screen at cinematograph halls, and of the possibility of devising some means of lessening the ill-effects of"