THE OXFORD OPHTHALMOLOGICAL CONGRESS, 1921

The XIIth Annual Meeting of the Oxford Ophthalmological Congress was held at Oxford, on July 6, 7, 8, and 9 last.

Members met at dinner in the hall of Keble College on the evening of Wednesday, July 6.

A new departure was made this year in an extension of the proceedings to the morning of Saturday, July 9, for it was felt by the Council that with the increase in the number of contributions to the programme insufficient time was available during two days only to enable members to go carefully through the museums and in addition to attend the demonstrations and papers.

The addition of the extra day proved an unqualified success, and will be adopted at future meetings.

As in former years, the proceedings took place in the Department of Human Anatomy of the University Museum, which had been kindly placed at the disposal of the Congress by Professor Arthur Thomson, professor of human anatomy.

The majority of the members enjoyed the hospitality of Keble College, which was again available through the courtesy of the warden, the Rev. Dr. Kidd.

The advantage which accrues from a return to college life, even though for so short a time, is considerable, for opportunity is thus afforded to members for a closer acquaintance with each other than would otherwise obtain, whilst occasion can be and is made for informal discussions on Ophthalmology in general. The latter was always aimed at by the founder, the late Robert W. Doyne, and it has ever proved a profitable feature of the Congress.

The attendance was above the average and included representatives from France, Denmark, Holland, and from nearly all British Possessions, together with a larger number from the British Isles than usual.

The proceedings opened at 10 a.m. on the morning of Thursday the 7th, with a short address of welcome by the Master, Mr. Sydney Stephenson, immediately followed by a discussion on “The Causes of Infection after Extraction of Senile Cataract.”

Dr. Victor Morax, who came over to open the discussion, pointed out that, with present day knowledge of operating, every surgeon should be in a position to avoid all sources of infection which come from himself, his instruments, or any liquids which he might use, but that he is not in a position wholly to prevent infection from the conjunctival sac.

Such infection may occur at any time from shortly after the operation up to fourteen days later, the more immediate being
usually the more severe and often leading to panophthalmitis. The later ones evolve iritis, irido-cyclitis, or the more severe plastic irido-cyclitis.

The most commonly found micro-organism is the pneumococcus, less frequently the staphylococcus and, rarely, the streptococcus, but in the cases of late irido-cyclitis it has been difficult to identify a micro-organism, though undoubtedly such must exist as a cause.

There is still much bacteriological work to be done in this sphere. The importance of a good operation with a clean cut incision and therefore rapidly healing wound, was emphasized, together with the advantage of the conjunctival flap.

Those who took part in the discussion were as follows: Dr. T. Harrison Butler (Leamington Spa), Mr. John Hern (Darlington), Mr. E. H. E. Stack (Bristol), Mr. P. H. Adams (Oxford), Mr. Burdon-Cooper (Bath), Mr. Rayner D. Batten (London), Mr. N. C. Ridley (Leicester), Major A. E. J. Lister, I.M.S., and Mr. Johnson Taylor (Norwich).

At the conclusion, the Annual General Meeting was held, when it was reported that 16 new members had been elected during the past year, making a total membership of over 320, and that the Congress was in a satisfactory position financially.

An invitation from an International Congress of Ophthalmology, which would take place in America in April next, was read, and it was hoped that as many as could would accept.

In the afternoon, details were given by Mr. R. J. E. Hanson, O.B.E., of an apparatus which would afford a rapid method of estimating stereoscopic vision, especially in the case of intending candidates for Gunnery in the Royal Navy, although also of value in all spheres of work.

Mr. Arthur Greene, of Norwich, described two cases of petrosal sinus sepsis, the source of infection being, apparently, styes in the lids.

Dr. William Wallace showed a beautiful and artistic series in water-colours of fundus conditions from war injuries; a unique collection on which Dr. Wallace, as both observer and artist, is to be heartily congratulated.

Mr. Rayner D. Batten followed with an interesting series of drawings of macular conditions.

On Friday, proceedings recommenced with the Doyne Memorial Lecture, delivered this year by Mr. Ernest E. Maddox, of Bournemouth, who chose as his subject, heterophoria, on which he is a world-wide authority. Delivered with logical clearness, the Lecture should prove of the utmost value in its practical as well as theoretical aspects. At the conclusion Mr. Maddox paid a fitting tribute to the Founder of the Congress and was then presented with the Doyne Memorial Medal for the year.
Dr. Charles Russ, of London, described an interesting discovery he had made with regard to the effect produced by the human eye when directed upon a delicate electrostatic system. Several models, which had previously been seen by a number of the leading physicists, were exhibited and demonstrations of the phenomenon given.

Mr. John Hern then read a paper on his experiences of "606" and its substitutes in eye diseases.

The afternoon was spent at the Eye Hospital and was given over to the consideration of chronic glaucoma. Mr. N. C. Ridley described his "trench" operation for the relief of tension, Dr. T. Harrison Butler urged the necessity of early diagnosis and operation in the chronic forms of the disease and described his method of dealing with the acute forms. Mr. P. H. Adams (Deputy-Master) described an operative procedure which was a combination of the Lagrange and Herbert operations with a modification devised by himself, and shewed several successful cases. Mr. B. Cridland commented on some points in the performance of the Lagrange operation. An interesting discussion followed the papers.

On Saturday morning Dr. T. Harrison Butler read a paper on "Loss of vitreous during cataract extraction," a subject which aroused much interest and free discussion.

Mr. Percival J. Hay showed ophthalmic instruments and apparatus which he had devised, and also some useful coloured test-types. The value of the latter in practice was clearly explained, and the types should prove a useful adjunct in the consulting room.

A paper by Dr. Hamilton McIlroy was read, in absentia, on "Some points in the work of a school oculist."

The scientific and commercial museums were open daily.

Amongst exhibits in the former were the beautiful series of water-colour drawings illustrating abnormal fundus conditions shewn by Dr. William Wallace, a useful operating chair devised by Mr. P. H. Adams, together with a number of interesting pathological specimens shewn by various members.

Demonstrations of reading by the optophone were also given by a blind lady.

Ophthalmic instruments, apparatus, and new books, etc., were shewn in the commercial museum, some thirteen firms contributing stalls.

On Thursday afternoon the Congress held a garden party at Brasenose College, members being welcomed by R. W. Jeffery, Esq., M.A., the Historian of the College, and Mrs. Jeffery. A short but extremely interesting address was given by Mr. Jeffery on the history and traditions of the college.

The official dinner was held in Keble Hall on Thursday evening, July 7, and was well attended. The visitors present included the
Rev. Dr. Kidd, Warden of Keble College, Sir Archibald Garrod, Regius Professor of Medicine, and the Rev. Canon Matheson. As a whole the meeting, favoured with fine weather, was one of the most successful yet held.

ABSTRACTS

NYCTOPSIS

(1) Flügel, J. C.—A minor study of Nyctopsis.

(1 and 2) These two papers are the result of war research undertaken at the psychological laboratory of University College, London, under the direction of Professor Spearman.

The authors point out that the testing of an individual’s visual powers in the dark is a practice which is not usually included in the routine eyesight tests; but that during the war, and especially in relation to night flying, the possession of adequate visual powers in the dark or in reduced illumination became a matter of supreme importance.

The research was begun by J. C. Flügel and continued in more detail by Wynn Jones. Dealing with J. C. Flügel’s paper in the first place, four distinct experiments were undertaken: 1. Visual acuity in ordinary daylight; 2. Light sensitivity—the ability to distinguish light from darkness; 3. Visual acuity in dim light; 4. Visual acuity in rather brighter light.

It may here be mentioned that the tests employed by both Flügel and Wynn Jones were carried out binocularly. It has been noted that in dark adaptation summation of stimuli occurs and so this must be held in mind when comparing their results with those of other observers. However, for practical purposes the binocular result is of most service.

The following procedure was adopted in the experiments. The observer was first placed before Snellen’s types and his visual acuity recorded. This was always done at mid-day so that reasonable light adaptation was obtained. He then entered the dark room and was light adapted to a uniform standard by gazing at a large white sheet, illuminated by a 1,000 candle power lamp, for two minutes. Then the lamp was extinguished and the observer waited in the darkness for one minute. The observer was stationed in a dark