COUNCIL OF BRITISH OPHTHALMOLOGISTS

A Report on some Public Authorities who are in the habit of referring Ophthalmic Cases to Hospitals for Examination, Treatment, and (or) Report.—Continued from page 527, 1921.

In further pursuance of the matters dealt with in this Report the following communication has been received from the Postmaster-General:

To the Hon. Secretary, Council of British Ophthalmologists.

Sir,—In reply to your letter of the 17th instant, I am directed to inform you that the Postmaster-General has no authority to provide for any of his employees medical advice or treatment beyond those normally given by a general medical practitioner.

Where a Medical Officer of the Department considers it desirable that a Post Office patient should in his own interest seek specialist advice or treatment, he informs the patient of the fact and advises him as to the means of obtaining it.

Where the Department for its own purposes desires specialist advice, it selects a specialist for the particular case in question, and pays him a fee in the ordinary way; but there are not sufficient cases of this kind in any one district to warrant the regular appointment of a specialist.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

(Signed)—C. L. M. Peel,

(For the Secretary).

Police Force of Great Britain
Continued from page 526, 1921.

In further pursuance of the matters dealt with on the above subject, a further communication was sent to the Home Office, as follows:

To the Home Secretary,

3rd November, 1921.

Sir,—The Council of British Ophthalmologists has had its attention drawn to the large number of Police Officers and recruits sent to the hospitals for ophthalmic advice, treatment, or report.

The Council understands that the Watch Committees of the various counties and boroughs provide medical treatment for their Police Officers with the object of ensuring efficiency in the performance of their duties.

The Council notes that with few exceptions (e.g., Borough of Leeds), no ophthalmic surgeons are appointed to whom Police surgeons can refer eye cases, and it further considers that the
efficiency of a Police Force cannot be maintained without such assistance.

The Council feels that a medical report on which presumably official action may be taken should, in justice to all concerned, be given only by those officially appointed by the Police Authorities for that purpose.

After due consideration the Council desired me to forward you the following resolution:—“The Police Medical service cannot be adequate unless it includes the services of ophthalmic surgeons to whom recruits and officers can be referred for expert opinion, treatment, and report.”

Yours faithfully,

(Signed)—M. S. Mayou,
Hon. Secretary.

The following reply has been received:—

The Hon. Secretary, Council of British Ophthalmologists.

23rd November, 1921.

SIR,—I have laid before the Secretary of State your letter of 3rd November and the Resolution passed by the Council of British Ophthalmologists suggesting the appointment of ophthalmic surgeons in all Police Forces, and I am directed by him to say in reply that he is fully alive to the importance of securing proper advice in ophthalmic cases. He thinks, however, that in the Metropolitan Police the requirements are met by the present arrangements. In the County and Borough Police the matter rests primarily with the local Police Authorities and the Secretary of State cannot insist on the appointment of medical specialists by all local Police Authorities.

I am, Sir,
Your obedient Servant,
(Signed)—Edward Troup.

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ANNOTATIONS

A Report on some Public Authorities who are in the habit of referring Ophthalmic Cases to Hospitals for Examination, Treatment and (or) Report.

The relation of public authorities, administering public money, and having large numbers of employees in their service, to hospitals, is one which has always aroused some difference of opinion and has rarely given anything but dissatisfaction to the medical profession.

Primarily to secure the efficiency of the services for which they are responsible, and incidentally for the good of the servants in