

December 1924

Better Eyesight

A MONTHLY MAGAZINE DEVOTED TO THE PREVENTION AND CURE OF IMPERFECT SIGHT WITHOUT GLASSES

December, 1924

Suggestions

1. Imagine things are moving all the time.

When riding in a railroad train, when one looks out of the car window, telegraph poles and other objects, although they are stationary, appear to be moving. To stop the movement is impossible, and the effort to do so may be very uncomfortable. The greater the effort, the greater the discomfort, and is the cause of heart sickness, headaches and nausea. It can be demonstrated that any movement of the head and eyes produces an apparent movement of stationary objects.

2. Blink often.

By blinking is meant, closing and opening both eyes rapidly. When done properly, things are seen continuously and they always move with a quick jump in various directions. Regarding stationary objects without blinking is an effort, a strain which always lowers the vision.

3. Read the Snellen Test Card at fifteen feet as well as you can, every night and morning.

School children and others are often cured of imperfect sight by reading a familiar card, first with both eyes and then with each eye separately. It is the only method practiced which prevents Myopia in school children.

4. Fine Print.

Read fine print at six inches when possible every night and morning. If not possible, do the best you can. Just regarding the white spaces between the lines of fine print without reading the letters is a benefit.

5. Palming.

Palm for five minutes, ten times daily when convenient.

Palming

By W. H. Bates, M.D.

BY palming is meant that the eyes are covered with the palms of one or both hands with the eyes closed. The object of palming is to obtain relaxation or rest of the eyes and mind. With the eyes closed and covered, the patient does not see. When properly done, the field is black and the patient does not really see anything. Host patients when they palm however, imagine they see a great many things, especially different colored lights, red, green, shades of blue and white lights in a single or multiple form, for various periods of time. Some patients imagine they see these lights so vividly that it is difficult to convince them that they only imagine what they see.

When the patient palms successfully and obtains perfect relaxation, he imagines he sees a perfect black. The number of people who can do this is small, and it can only be accomplished by individuals who have perfect sight

While palming, one does not obtain relaxation by any kind of an effort or a strain. When nothing is done, one does not do anything. It is well to realize that palming may be done properly, or it may be done wrong.

It has been demonstrated that all persons with imperfect sight have a conscious or unconscious strain when they try to see. Palming can only accomplish relaxation when the patient does not try to see while palming. Some people realize that when their eyes are closed and covered with the palms of the hands, it is not possible to see anything, and so they do not try; but other people may strain their eyes to see while palming, although they know it is wrong. In such cases, it is very evident that mental control is lost. They do things that they do not plan to do. Some people can let their minds drift from one tiling to another without much, if any effort. Some cases become able to palm more successfully than others.

One of my patients discovered a very simple and efficient method to improve palming. While treating a friend who previously had never obtained any benefit from palming, she told him a story of a black ant This black ant came out of the dark soil and climbed up the stem of a beautiful rose. It was slow work with the ant, but it kept on climbing, going on to the extremity of first one branch and then another, crawling to the extreme tip of every leaf until finally it located the flower. It crawled with great labor over the petals, until it found deep down in the center of the rose, a little white cup filled with honey. The patient could picture the ant carrying off some of the honey, crawling to the top of the flower, and then down back to the stem, finally meeting another ant on the ground, with whom he had a short talk with much gesticulating of heads and feet Then the second ant started off on the same journey.

The patient, while palming, listened very attentively to this talk, which was drawn out for fifteen minutes or half an hour. He volunteered the information that at last he could see black, and when he removed his hands from his closed eyelids, and opened his eyes, his vision for the Snellen Test Card was unusually good. Before he palmed, he was unable to see a single letter and was practically blind. After palming and visualizing the story of the ant, he was able to see his way about the room without being led, and to read some of the letters of the Snellen Test Card.

The story of the ant with its successive mental pictures, suggests other stories of other things with other mental pictures. Some persons are able to let their minds drift while palming. It is normal for the mind to think of many things that come and go without any effort or strain being made. It is quite an art to let the mind drift and think of all sorts of things without any effort or without trying to see one thing in particular. As long as we are awake, it is perfectly normal to think of many things which come into the consciousness without any effort.

A school teacher who suffered from eyestrain with severe headaches, was able to obtain relief almost immediately by imagining herself in a boat which was drifting. She enjoyed drifting down some river of the north, with a scenery consisting mostly of ice and snow. For a change, she would select some tropical river with its tropical vegetation, birds and animals. She had seen a bird of paradise in captivity and enjoyed the memory of its brilliant feathers. Crocodiles seemed very interesting, and the play of the monkeys in the trees was also of interest and gave her mind much to think about. While drifting down these rivers, she became so interested in her imagination of the change in scenery, that she quite forgot her eyestrain and her headaches while palming. When she noticed or thought of her palming, she found that she was seeing a perfect black, which means that she saw nothing at all with her eyes closed and covered with the palms of her hands.

One patient who had great difficulty in palming successfully was very much disturbed by seeing different colored lights. When she tried to get rid of them by an effort, they became much worse, and her discomfort was increased by the palming, instead of being relieved.

I suggested to her that she think of some enjoyable trip she had made going to Europe. She replied that she was always seasick, and the trip did her no good. The only thing that she could remember without discomfort was a walk in the woods, making note of the names of the different birds she saw. She was much interested in Botany, and could tell the names of most of the wild flowers near her home.

Some people while palming can remember the branches of trees or high grass moving in the wind. The running water of a brook can be remembered with benefit, provided no effort is made. A trip to the seashore becomes restful, enjoyable when one imagines the rollers or waves flowing in and out When riding in a rapidly moving train, the scenery observed when looking out of a window appears to be moving and is usually restful to the eyes and mind. When riding in an automobile, the driver imagines the road moving toward the car without an effort and is more relaxed than a passenger who is interested in the moving scenery and strains to see it and tries consciously or unconsciously to stop the movement.

If one makes an effort to see things stationary, a headache, eye pain or some other discomfort may be felt. Palming becomes restful and beneficial when the memory of moving objects becomes perfect or when one can remember the imaginary movement of stationary objects.

By remembering stationary objects apparently moving when palming as well as they can be imagined when riding in a car, one may obtain the desired relaxation.

The memory of halos, when palming as well as they can be imagined with the eyes open is also a great benefit. Alternating is a benefit to the sight as well as to the memory and palming becomes improved with a greater amount of relaxation.

Flashing or palming for a brief moment, alternating with the eyes open for a longer time, improves palming and the vision.

Stories from the Clinic

No. 58—CHRISTMAS

By Emily C. Liernan

I WISH everyone who is interested in our clinic, could have been with us last year at Christmas time. We had our first tree. Not only did our clinic patients enjoy it, but, our private patients as well. I fear too, that on more than one occasion, a private patient was kept waiting much longer than he cared to wait, while Dr. Bates hovered around that Christmas Tree. He never takes a vacation because he loves his work so much, but that tree needed his attention he thought, even though he was keeping his patients waiting. His orders were not to purchase anything cheap. His clinic family is precious to him and must have the best of everything. When it came time to distribute the toys and candies to the children, I saw him peeping in at the doorway. The children all love him because he does so much for them. All this added pleasure of having a tree for them did him a world of good.

At the Harlem Hospital we were not permitted to have a tree in our section, but the Christmas spirit prevailed in our room there just the same. Deep down in my heart I wished each year to have a tree in addition to gifts for my big family at the Clinic. With a reserve which was left over from the year before, and also big enough to bring happiness for all, we were able to have gifts and a tree that reached from the floor to the ceiling.

Everyone connected with our office helped to trim the tree. It stood in a corner of our reception room where it could be seen by all. Pretty dolls for the little girls peeped from beneath the lower branches. Games and mechanical toys were placed where every boy could choose the one he liked best.

There were toys also for the smaller children and suitable gifts for the men and women and boxes of candy for everyone. One of our patients at this time was suddenly taken away from his wife and two little children. He was suffering with tuberculosis and was sent to an institution. He told me before he left that he did not mind his suffering at all, but he was thinking of the cheerless Christmas his wife and family would have. However, it was not as cheerless as he expected it would be. A friend of mine supplied them with a turkey and our Santa Claus did the rest. You never saw such a happy family. We were doubly repaid for our labor of love, because every patient at the time responded to the treatment. Some were cured before Christmas time, but were invited to come and share in the Christmas cheer. Many of them came.

Something happened which was not at all expected nor planned. The son of a multi-millionaire who was being treated by Dr. Bates at this time, came at his appointed hour. He stood and looked at the tree with great approval. It was aglow with colored electric lights. Then he spied the toys and shouted with joy. All of a sudden he disappeared. He was found later with Dr. Bates, asking the doctor questions that had nothing to do with the treatment of his eyes. The story of his questions were:

"Which toy is mine Doctor? Can I have the one I like best? Did Santa really leave this one or that one for me?"

His aunt who was with him was mortified. She made all sorts of apologies, imploring the doctor not to listen to him. "Why," said she, "He has money in his pocket now, to spend as he sees fit."

The doctor apparently paid no attention to her. His eyes were fixed on the little rich boy who could appreciate a toy meant for a poor little laddie. Dr. Bates informed him that the Clinic Santa Claus would be pleased to have him select the toy he liked best, for we really had more than enough to go around.

There were fishing ponds and mechanical boxers, supposed to be Jack Dempsey and his opponent. The latter was a great delight to the little fellow, so we did not have to guess which one he wanted.

A dear old man from the Blind Man's Home was very grateful for a package given him by a private patient.

One little girl, after she had chosen her dolly, said she didn't know Santa Claus loved her so much.

I want to thank my friends who made all this possible and to wish them a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Nervousness

By Emily A. Meder

WE all know that anything that is accomplished under a strain or tension is never done correctly. A good demonstration of this was given in the Central Fixation Office just a few days ago. Dr. Bates entered, with a visitor who wished to help others. Upon testing the man's sight, Dr. Bates was surprised to find that it was very imperfect. He explained that to help others he would first have to benefit his own vision. "To begin with," Dr. Bates said, "Read the Snellen Test Chart every day."

Unexpectedly, Dr. Bates called upon one of the stenographers to read the test chart, standing about 12 feet away. She stopped her work, a little in confusion, and began to read. She reached the twenty line, when she could read no further. This surprised me, because this same girl had previously read the 10 line at 15 feet, better than normal.

In turn, each girl in the office was called. Those who were waiting became nervous, while the first girl's failure left a bad mental effect upon the rest. All in all Dr. Bates was disappointed in the vision of his office force.

But—just as soon as Dr. Bates and his visitor left the office, excuses and alibis were heard from all sides. One girl went up and read the card better at a further distance than she did while she had an audience. This showed that we all were timid of saying the wrong thing, made an effort to see, and saw nothing at all. Another girl remarked that the card hangs before her all day, and she knows it by heart, but even then her nervousness made her forget the letters.

Eye Education

Miss Robinson, a school teacher, and patient of Dr. Bates, has been able to help a great many of her friends, although she herself is not entirely cured. Her own failures enable her to direct her pupil in the right and wrong method. We are publishing a few of her cases which she benefited.

MYOPIA

MISS P., a school teacher, had worn glasses for fifteen years. She said she came from a nearsighted family, and her right eye was very prominent. After removing her glasses she read R.V. 10/70, L.V., 10/30.

In a few weeks of practice read Right, 10/15 and Left 10/10. In a little over a month she started to teach again.

A year later Miss P. reported that she sees 10/10 with each eye and is having no trouble with near or distant vision. The prominent right eye now looks like the other.

EXOPHTHALMIC GOITRE

Mrs. K. had worn glasses for six years. Her vision with both eyes was 10/10. She was discouraged with her eyes, however, because they were very prominent, with dilated pupils. One physician told her she had a goitre disturbance. She could not see the moving pictures without her glasses, had a great dread of bright lights, and her eyes were constantly inflamed.

Mrs. K. had no faith in the new method of treatment, but tried it as a last resort. She did not cooperate very well, but in six weeks she caught the trick of relaxation. Her eyes became more comfortable and she used them for all purposes. Six months later this patient reported that while she had no further trouble with her eyes, she had to practice the palming and swinging every day to keep relaxed.

SQUINT

The left eye of Darwin was injured by instruments at birth. It turned in frequently when he was a baby, and became noticeably worse when he attended school. Darwin was twelve and wore glasses for three years, but the oculist who treated him said the eye was no stronger as a result. The vision

Darwin is so comfortable that he has lost interest in practicing further, and the parents are satisfied with the eye straight. For this reason there may be no further progress.

William returned in four months to have his eyes tested and read 10/10 with each eye separately, with no headaches. A year later he visited me again, and his eyes looked splendid. He read 12/10 with either eye, no headaches, read as long as he wished to, and had no trouble with school books, as far as seeing was concerned.

After the fairies had gone and the rich man found himself in his chair without his glasses and without his headache, perfectly comfortable, with his sight better than it had ever been before in years, he acquired a lasting smile. He always says, "The fairies took off my glasses and I will never wear them again."

I TAKE great pleasure in thanking you for the help which I have received from studying your methods of treating defective vision.

The meeting was adjourned at the close of Dr. Bates' address.

Answer—The fact that you cured yourself by following the directions in my book, makes it possible to cure your mother in the same way. You will waste your time unless your mother has the courage to discard her glasses permanently.

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