February 1926

Better Eyesight

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

February, 1926

Demonstrate

1. That an effort to see always lowers the vision. Look at the Snellen test card at a distance of twenty feet. It may be possible for you to see the large letters and read them without any apparent effort, while the smaller letters produce a strain which you can feel. If you consciously increase the effort to see the smaller letters, your vision becomes more imperfect. It is not easy for you to realize that effort is always present when the vision is lowered. Knowing the cause of your imperfect sight is a great help in selecting the remedy.
2. That a state always lowers the vision. It is a truth that the normal eye blinks very frequently. In order to have normal sight, the eyes must blink. One can demonstrate that, when the patient looks at one letter at the distance with normal sight, or looks at one letter at a near point where it is seen clearly, keeping the eyes continuously open without blinking for a minute or longer, always lowers the vision for the dis-tance or for the near point. This should convince the patient that blinking is absolutely necessary in order to obtain good vision.
3. That palming, when done correctly, improves the vision. When the closed eyes are covered with one or both hands, and all light is excluded, the patient should see nothing at all, or a perfect black. This is a test to the eyes and always improves the sight at least temporarily. Palming can be done wrong. When it is practiced incorrectly, the field imagined by the patient contains streaks of red, white, blue, or other colors. The eyes are under a strain, and the vision is not materially improved by the wrong method of palming. It can be demon-strated that palming for half an hour or longer is a greater benefit than palming for only a few minutes.

Memory
By W. H. Bates, M.D.

When the sight is normal, the memory is perfect. The color and background of the letters or other objects seen, are remembered perfectly, instantaneously, and continuously.
ONE of the quickest cures of imperfect sight has been gained through the use of the memory. When the memory is perfect, the eyes at once become normal with normal vision. A perfect memory changes the elongated eyeball of myopia into the shorter length of the normal eye. No matter how high a degree of myopia one may have, when he has a perfect memory of some one thing, he is no longer myopic, but has normal eyes with normal vision.
An imperfect memory or an imperfect imagination may produce organic changes in the eyeball. The organic changes, which are present in many diseases of the eye, have been relieved with the aid of a perfect memory. In some cases the vision has been reduced to perception of light from scars on the front part of the eyeball. Perfect memory brings about the absorption of such opacities. A perfect memory has cured these obstinate cases.
Conical cornea is a very serious disease. Neither operation nor the use of drugs relieves or cures it. A perfect memory gives instant relief, the curvature of the cornea becomes normal, and the patient obtains normal vision.
Glaucoma has been referred to as a very treacherous disease of the eye, because symptoms of blindness may become apparent at unexpected moments. The pain of glaucoma may be very severe. In most cases, the eyeball becomes very hard. The vision fails in a few hours, and all perception of light may be lost. These very severe cases are usually not benefited by operation nor drugs. The practice of a perfect memory has relieved all the disagreeable symptoms, and the vision has returned to normal.
There are patients who suffer from paralysis of one or more of the nerves connected with the eye. By resting the nerves or the muscles to bring about a condition of relaxation, which is best obtained by a perfect memory, the symptoms of paralysis are relieved. Paralysis of the nerves of the eye is caused by too great activity and is relieved by relaxation.
When one of the eyes has been injured or has a foreign body in the inside of the eyeball, the good eye may become affected and, in rare cases, may even be lost before the eye that has been injured is lost. This is called sympathetic ophthalmia. Through the use of the perfect memory, these cases, although of many years' duration, have been benefited and normal vision obtained. To be able to demonstrate a perfect memory habitually or un-consciously, it is necessary first to consciously remember with the eyes closed or open one thing perfectly, until an unconscious habit is formed.
A person can remember what his own name is without having a mental picture of each letter of the name. This is an example of what is known as an abstract memory. A concrete memory is a more perfect memory, because one remembers a mental picture of the object with the eyes closed, as well or better, than he can see it with the eyes open. One can remember perfectly only that which is seen perfectly. When a letter is seen perfectly, the whiteness of the card or page in the neighbor-hood of the black letter is imagined whiter than the rest of the card or page, or that part in which there are no black letters. The whiter that one can imagine the white in the neighborhood of a letter, or inside of the letter, enables one to see the blackness of the letter blacker than before. In other cases, where the whiteness in the neighborhood of the letter is apparently of the same whiteness as the rest of the card, the memory or the imagination of the black letter is imperfect.
Mental pictures are imagined perfectly when the memory is perfect. A great many patients complain that they are unable to remember mental pictures of the letters of the Snellen test card. They can remember what the letters are but have no mental pictures of them. To obtain perfect mental pictures, it is necessary that the sight should be continuously good. Most people, when they fail to imagine mental pictures, try to remember too much at once. When remembering a letter, it is not necessary to recall all parts of the letter. The memory of the color or one small portion of the letter is sufficient. The smaller the part of a black letter that you remember, the blacker it is, and the easier it is to recall. It should be emphasized that when one has a perfect memory, con-tral fixation can always be demonstrated. When central fixation is absent, the memory of the letter, as well as the imagination or the sight, is always imperfect. One can regard a point or a small part of a letter by central fixation for only a short time, not longer than a few seconds, without the memory becoming imperfect. Shifting is necessary to maintain a perfect memory, which is continuous. In other words, when practicing central fixation, the point regarded changes frequently.
After a demonstration that central fixation is necessary for a perfect memory, one patient became able to imagine, with his eyes closed, a small letter "D" with a white center as white as snow, starch, or any other white object that he had ever seen. He had no trouble in doing this. He said that he could remember it easily and quite continuously. Then I requested him to remember an imperfect "0," which was a shade of light gray instead of black. It had no white center, but was covered with a blur or a fog. He was able to remember it quickly, easily, for a few seconds, but when he was requested to remember the imperfect "O" for a minute or longer, the gray shade became darker and, at times, lighter, and the memory of the imperfect "O" became very difficult. In spite of all the efforts he made, he was unable to remem-ber the "O" continuously. In strong contrast to the memory of the perfect "O" the memory or the imagination of the imperfect "O" was difficult. He agreed with me when I told him that in order to fail to see perfectly, he had to strive, strain, and make a tremendous effort. On the other hand, the memory or the imagination of the perfect "O" was spontaneous, easy, and continuous, and he experienced a feeling of general comfort in all his nerves. He was able to demonstrate that he could remember the perfect "0," provided he imagined it was moving, and that he could not remember it when he tried to imagine it stationary.
Flashing is a great help in improving mental pictures. With the eyes open, one may see a letter quite perfectly and have a mental picture of that letter with the eyes closed for a fraction of a second. By repeatedly flashing the letter in this way, the mental picture becomes more frequent and lasts longer. When the sight becomes more continuously good, the memory is also benefited, and with this improvement in the memory, the mental pictures become more perfect. The converse is also true. When the memory is improved, the sight is improved. You cannot have a perfect memory by any effort or strain. The more perfect your memory, the greater is your relaxation, and the more perfect is your sight.

Stories from the Clinic
No. 72: JANE
By Emily C. Lierman

A YEAR ago, a little girl named Jane, aged twelve years, came to me for treatment. She had worn glasses approximately four years for progressive myopia. Progressive near-sightedness is a very serious disease, in which the sight becomes worse more or less rapidly. With the increase in degree of near-sightedness, the retina becomes inflamed, and the vision is ultimately lost. This disease cannot be relieved by glasses nor by any known method of treatment, other than that recommended by Dr. Bates. Jane was also troubled with astigmatism.
When I first saw her, I was deeply impressed by her personality. She had unusual intelligence. Her parents were willing to make any sacrifice in order that Jane might be cured without glasses. She loved music but was too nearly to give it up temporarily, so that she could faithfully practice the daily treatment outlined for her.
When her vision was tested, she read 15/70 with the right eye and 15/50 with the left. After the first treatment, her vision with each eye improved to 15/40. The circular swing, which has proved so helpful in the cure of many patients, was her main treatment at the first visit. In this swing the head and eyes move in the orbit of a circle. They move continuously, and there is no opportunity to stare nor strain, as there may be when the head and eyes are just moved from side to side. The diameter of the circular swing should be as short as possible, because the greatest degree of relaxation can be obtained if a short circular swing can be practiced. There is this objection, however, that when the orbit of the swing is short, the patient may unconsciously stop the swing, and a stare or strain results. In a circular swing, in which the diameter of the circle is longer, relaxation is always obtained. The circular swing can be practiced with the patient standing or sitting. The results vary from time to time. At one time, the greatest benefit may be obtained while the patient is sitting, at another time while he is standing.
Having worn glasses steadily for four years, it was not so easy for Jane to go without them in the beginning. The second time she was tested she complained of a headache. This was immediately relieved by the circular swing, and her vision improved to 15/20. After this visit, she practiced the treatment at home for six months or longer, but she never failed to report the condition of her eyes.
About a month after her first treatment, her vision for the test card had improved to 15/10. In the treatment, we used a card with numbers, another with E's pointing in different directions, which is called Pot Hooks, and still another with different letters. She found no difficulty in reading all the letters and figures on these cards at fifteen feet. It was noticed, too, that her little nervous habits disappeared. I gave Jane several treatments, and in all her eye-tests, she did not make a single mistake.
Her mother decided to try test cards unfamiliar to Jane, because she had memorized all the letters of the other cards, and so purchased a test card at an optician's office. As Jane tried to read the card, she strained her eyes and became very uncomfortable. So did I. The only letter that did not make me strain was the large letter at the top of the card. This is seen by the normal eye at 200 feet. All the other lines of letters were so closely set together that they seemed lik a herd of black sheep. My head began to ache as I tried in vain to separate each letter in order to read the card. It could not be done. Before I asked Jane to palm, I reminded her of a figure five on the familiar "C" test card, which she
had memorized. Her mind was then relaxed, and we were able to proceed further with her treatment. As I palmed with her, my mind drifted to the test card which her mother had purchased. Mentally, I tried to separate the letters as I would separate sheep, in counting them as they followed each other over a stile or fence. The harder I tried, the less successful I became with my mental picture. Instead of imagining the sheep jumping over a fence or stile, one by one, I could only imagine their going over a precipice altogether and falling over each other in doing so. This produced a pain in my head and eyes, which I relieved instantly by the sway of my body from side to side, seeing objects about the room, moving opposite to the movement of my body. My advice to Jane's mother was, not to use that test card for practice at any time.
Other test cards, unfamiliar to Jane, were then used. I placed Jane thirty feet away from the card and without any hesitation or one mistake, she read every letter. She did not have to be reminded to blink her eyes regularly, because it had become a habit. Blinking helped so much in keeping her relaxed. Our small fundamental test card, pocket size, was then used. We placed it in a good light, and Jane surprised me by reading the R 2 3 line at six feet. This is read by the normal eye, at three feet.
This article ought to convince any patient that progressive myopia is curable. It should encourage those who have given the method a trial, to keep on practicing as Jane did and win out as she has. As no time have I met a more wonderful child. She loved to practice the method every day. I shall always remember the last precious hour I spent with her. Her last words to me were:
"There is one thing I am certain about and that is: None of my children, nor grand children, nor great grand children need ever wear glasses."

The Magic Kitten
By George M. Guild

ONCE upon a time a small black kitten strayed about the streets. The city seemed a huge world, peopled with giants, who pushed and shoved him here and there. He tried of escape them, but their enormous feet seemed everywhere. Finally, he came to a crooked alley, which was quiet and peaceful. He crept behind an ash barrel, glad to be away from the terrifying crowds. He grew drowsy and was falling asleep when suddenly a loud crash sounded in his ears. His heart began to pound faster and faster, and he wondered what would happen next. He was so frightened that he could not move.
When nothing happened his fear left him and, like all little kittens, he became curious. He poked his dose from behind the barrel, but could see no one. Then he grew very bold and jumped to the top of the barrel, where he saw only a broken flower-pot with some faded roses scattered among the fragments. With his paw, he gently touched one and then another of the faded blossoms. They all seemed to move. He jumped down, and in his excitement pushed one to the ground. He ran a little way off and then cautiously approached to look at it.
Slowly the petals unfolded. In the center appeared a tiny golden fairy waving a beautiful wand. She danced gaily upon one of the petals and beckoned to the little kitten to come closer. He was frightened, but he felt a magic power drawing him nearer and nearer. As he came toward her, she bent over and gently touched him with her wand.
How strange he felt! Happy and contented, not like the little stray kitten that stole about the streets looking fhr shelter.
"Now you are a beautiful kitten, golden as the sun. Gone is the ugly, black creature that you were. Favored of the fairies, scamper away and make others happy as I have made you!" Saying this, the fairy hopped into the centre of the flower, and the petals folded about her.
The kitten ran off as fast as he could go, to carry out the bidding of the fairy. Soon he came to a group of boys and girls at play. The children stopped their games to look at the little golden kitten. As they crowded about him he danced merrily, swinging his tail in time with his steps. The children clapped their hands with glee. The more joyous they became, the more sprightly did he dance.
Suddenly he stopped before little Eppie who had been trying to see him dance. Poor little Eppie's eyes were crossed, and it was difficult for her to see anything, even with her spectacles on. The kitten began to sway rhythmically from side to side. Eppie watched him without moving her eyes. She tried so hard to see him, and stared so much that he seemed only a blur of gold. She wanted to see him so badly, but the more she tried, the less she saw. Finally, Eppie could no longer keep back her tears. Seeing her tears, he danced over to her and gently touched her with his paw. As she bent over to pet him the magic kitten reached up and pulled off her glasses and let them fall to the ground. He stood up on his hind paws, grasped both of Eppie's hands and began to sway slowly from side to side.
He then dropped her hands and scampered off a short distance. Eppie followed him and looked down into his shining eyes. He kept blinking up at her, looking very wise. Eppie blinked back at him, and all at once she realized that she could see him perfectly. He turned three somersaults in the air, landing gracefully on his feet, and stood before her swinging his beautiful tail. Eppie watched the movement of his tail, swaying her body in rhythm with it.
The children all cried: "Oh, look at Eppie's eyes! How straight they are, and she hasn't her glasses on, either!" Then, they, too, started to sway from side to side, as they watched the swinging tail of the golden kitten.
By this time it had grown dusk and the children had to go home. They all wanted to take the kitten home, but he clung close to Eppie. When the other children . tried to touch him, a tongue of golden flame shot from his mouth, and they quickly withdrew. Eppie held him tightly in her arms and ran home to tell her mother and father the glad news.
Before she had a chance to tell them all about her wonderful experience, they cried out in amazement at her changed appearance. Eppie told them breathlessly about the magic kitten, and what it had done for her. At the mention of him the kitten jumped out of her arms and began to swing his golden tail. With one accord, they all swayed in time with its motion. And so they became very jolly and happy.
The next morning, when Eppie awoke, the kitten had disappeared. Disappointed, she set out for school. Much to her surprise, there at the door of the school-house stood the golden kitten, waiting for Eppie. He ran ahead of her and jumped up on the teachers desk. He stood there swinging his tail to and fro.
The children, who were waiting in their seats for the arrival of the teacher, took great delight in the kitten's performance. They felt impelled by his mystic power to sway in time with the swing of his tail.
In the midst of their merriment, the teacher entered the room. The children stopped in four, but the magic kitten became even more animated. The teacher approached her desk, and as she leaned over to see the kitten, her glasses dropped off her nose and broke in a thousand pieces upon the floor. She became angry and was about to throw the kitten from the desk, when she, too, felt the magic power of his swinging tail. In spite of herself, she swayed from side to side. Her anger left her, and she forgot her broken glasses.
The children looked at her in amazement, for they or anyone else had never seen her without glasses. The teacher was just as amazed as the children, for she suddenly became aware that she could see her class clearly. She was as joyous as the children had been.
"Surely this must be the magic kitten we read about yesterdays" she exclaimed.
While she was speaking the kitten jumped down from the desk, flourished his tail and disappeared. The children were dismayed, but the teacher said: "Even though the magic kitten has gone, we shall always remember what he has taught us. We will set aside a time each day to practice the swinging movements of the magic kitten.

Cases Benefited
By Dr. Clara C. Ingham, Portland, Oregon

CATARACT: A lady sixty-five. Vision of right eye 20/200; left eye 20/100. Unable to do any reading. Six months treatment gives vision 20/20. Can read diamond type print.
STRABISMUS: Child of ten years. Vision 20/40. After eight months' treatment, vision is normal and eye straight.
College student afflicted from childhood with ex-treme strabismus and oscillation. One of the most difficult cases for correction that ever entered my office. Sight in strabismic eye 2/200; in the straight eye 20/50. At the present time the oscillation has practically ceased while the strabismic eye is straight much of the time. Patient still comes about twice a week and while not yet normal, the vision of both eyes is greatly improved. This young man's mother is a teacher in the schools, and her son's remuneration has done much to place Dr. Bates' Method before the schools.
PAIN: Patient a man of thirty-two. Vision 10/200. Severe pain in eyeballs and temples. Eye troubles from childhood. Says he was never conscious of absolute freedom from pain. After a year's treatment, is one of our greatest enthusiasts for good eyesight. He is an in. structor in a college and will gladly spread the gospel.
NEAR-SIGHTEDNESS: Grammar school girl about fourteen, near-sighted from straining to see the blackboard. Vision in right eye 10/100; in left eye 10/70. After two months normal sight, and has learned how to protect herself against eye strain in school, so has no fear of a recurrence of the trouble.
ACUTE GLAUCOMA in right eye, the left eye having been completely lost by the same disease more than a year previous. The right eye responded very readily to treatment, as has the left also, though seemingly past help when the patient first came.

Eyestrain
By W. H. Bates, M.D.

EYESTRAIN is the cause of many serious diseases of the eye. It is always manifest when imperfect sight is present. The normal eye does not ordi narily have eyestrain. When it is acquired, the sight always becomes imperfect. When the sight is imperfect the eyes are under a strain. They are staring,—making an effort to see. This condition is not cured by glasses. The fact that wearing glasses always increases eyestrain can be demonstrated.
After treatment has been instituted, it is soon found that the use of eye-drops or drugs is of no avail. Bath-ing the eyes with a solution of boracic acid or other similar remedies does not give the desired results. Attention to general health, physical exercise, and diet does not relieve symptoms of eyestrain. It is commonly a chronic condition. Patients who are suffering from this malady have usually acquired a habit of continually rubbing an effort to see. One cannot correct this bad habit of eyestrain without substituting in its place the beneficial habit of practicing relaxation continuously.
The normal eye is always moving. To demonstrate eyestrain, one must first imagine the eyes stationary or actually force them to be stationary. This should prove to the patient that the eyes are under a strain when stationary, or when objects are imagined to be stationary. The normal eye maintains the habit of relaxation,—of always moving. When the eyes move, stationary objects are imagined to be moving in the direction opposite to the movement of the head and eyes. When the normal eye has normal vision,the head and eyes are continuously moving. This is a rest to the eyes, and a habit which can be more easily practiced than the habit of straining the eyes in an effort to keep them stationary.
Many people state that they have no time to practice the method which will bring about relaxation. This objection is answered by the fact that everyone has as much time to use his eyes correctly as he has to use them incorrectly. When the eyes are used correctly, the patient feels more comfortable, which should encourage him to use his eyes properly. When the eyes are not used correctly, discomfort is felt. Pain, fatigue and other nervous symptoms are produced.
Subjective conjunctivitis is a very painful symptom of eyestrain. The eyes burn and smart and the patient suffers from pain, fatigue, and many other disagreeable sensations. Later the eyelids become inflamed.
In the year 1884 I roomed with a young medical student who was suffering from this form of eyestrain. During the examination period he could not read more than five or ten minutes before his eyes became so sore and painful that he was unable to read at all. His physician prescribed a spray which had no apparent benefit. Another doctor prescribed flesh gloves to be used in rub bing the skin all over the body. He derived temporary benefit from this treatment, but it had to be repeated at frequent intervals. It seemed to me at the time that the eyestrain was relieved by the massage, but a more thorough observation later proved that this was untrue. The relief was manifest when the massage was delayed or postponed, or when he had rested his eyes.
One evening while I was reading he said to me: "Why do you blink so often?"
"Because it is an easy way to rest my eyes," I answered.
He practiced blinking and obtained complete relief. "My eyes are cool and comfortable, my sight is perfect, and best of all, I can remember what I read more easily," he stated.
We investigated the facts. He demonstrated many times that when he read without blinking the symptoms of eyestrain soon appeared, and his vision became worse. Other students tried it as well, and we all were positive that staring or trying to see without blinking always caused eyestrain. When the blinking was practiced relief was always obtained. There were no exceptions.

Questions and Answers

Question—It is difficult for me to find time enough to gain perfect relaxation. What would you suggest?
Answer—You have just as much time to relax as you have to strain. Practice relaxation all day long. Whenever you move your head or eyes, notice that stationary objects move in the direction opposite to the movement of your head or eyes. When walking about the room or on the street, the floor or pavement appears to come toward you, while objects on either side of you move in the direction opposite to the movement of your body. Remember to blink frequently just as the normal eye does. Constantly shift your eyes from one point to another, seeing the point regarded more clearly than all other parts. When talking with anyone, do not stare. Look first at one eye and then the other, remembering to blink. Shift from the eyes to the nose, to one cheek and then to the other, then to the mouth, the chin, and back to the forehead.
Question—Why is it that I have perfect vision only in flashes? Can these flashes become permanent?
Answer—You have not yet lost your unconscious habit of straining. When relaxation methods are practiced faithfully at all times, the flashes of improved vision become more frequent and last longer until the vision becomes continuously good.
Question—What causes twitching eyelids?
Answer—Strain causes twitching eyelids and is relieved by rest and relaxation. Palming, sun treatment, swinging, blinking are very beneficial.
Question—Can you explain why I see yellow and blue spots after looking at the sun?
Answer—You are straining. Do not look directly at the sun until your eyes are more accustomed to it. Practice the sun treatment-sit in the sun with the eyes closed. Allow the sun to shine directly upon your closed-eyelids, as you slowly move your head a short distance from side-to side. Do this for half an hour or longer as often as possible whenever the sun is shining.
Question—Is working or reading under electric light harmful? Should a shade be worn?
Answer—It is not harmful to read by electric light if the eyes are used properly. Do not wear a shade or any other protection for the eyes. Practice sun treatment.
Question—When remembering a black period, I see a bright disk with a small black center. Is this seeing a period?
Answer—No, you are straining. The period that you imagine is very imperfect, because to remember the period, and at the same time a very bright disk, is an unconscious strain. You cannot strain and remember the bright disk, and simultaneously relax and remember a black period. When your bright disk is prominent, everything else is remembered under a strain. You cannot strain and relax at the same time.

Previous Issue
ᴛᴏᴛᴏᴛᴏᴛᴏᴛᴏᴛᴏ ᴛᴏᴛᴏ Issue
ᴛᴏᴛᴏᴛᴏᴛᴏᴛᴏ To Contents Page