March 1922

Better Eyesight

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

March, 1922

SEE THINGS MOVING

WHEN riding in a railroad train, travelling rapidly, a passenger looking out a window can imagine more or less vividly that stationary objects, trees, houses, telegraph poles, are moving past in the opposite direction. If one walks along the street, objects to either side appear to be moving. When the eyes move from side to side a long distance with or without the movement of the head or body it is possible to imagine objects not directly regarded to be moving. To see things moving avoid looking directly at them while moving the eyes.

The Long Swing: No matter how great the mental or other strain may be, one can, by moving the eyes a long distance from side to side with the movement of the head and body in the same direction, imagine things moving opposite over a wide area. The eyes or mind are benefitted.

The Short Swing: To imagine things are moving a quarter of an inch or less, gradually shorten the long swing and decrease the speed to a rate of a second or less for each swing. Another method is to remember a small letter perfectly with the eyes closed and noting the short swing. Alternate with the eyes open and closed.

The Universal Swing: Demonstrate that when one imagines or sees one letter on a card at a distance or at a near point that the card moves with the letter and that every other letter or object seen or imagined in turn also swings. This is the universal swing. Practice it all the time because the ability to see or to do other things is benefitted.

Practice the imagination of the swing constantly. If one imagines things are stationary, the vision is always imperfect, and effort is required and one does not feel comfortable. To stare and strain takes time. To let things move is easier. One should plan to practice the swing observed by the eye with normal vision: as short at least as the width of the letter at twenty feet or six inches, as slow as a second to each movement and all done easily, rhythmically, continuously.

READY FOR THE BETTER EYESIGHT LEAGUE!

By Roberts Everett

The cause of better eyesight is soon to come into its own through a new medium. Every reader of this article has an opportunity to become a Founder of the Better Eyesight League.

THE Better Eyesight League is to become a reality. So assured is its formation and functioning, that this article is an official call for an organization meeting—in New York City, at four o'clock in the afternoon of Wednesday, March 8th, The organization meeting will be held in Room 504, 300 Madison Avenue, at the corner of 41st Street.

Last month's Better Eyesight carried a proposal for the forming of this League, its working called for by "the sightless, the maimed of vision, those denied of Nature's freely-offered share of light and color, with an unescapable appeal?"

As a result of that one article, sufficient enthusiastic support has been vouchsafed to make possible this call for an immediate organization meeting—to form a Better Eyesight League "to relieve the sufferings and discomforts of those afflicted with imperfect eyesight, to disseminate knowledge of the scientific cure and prevention of imperfect eyesight without the use of glasses, and to promote further research and investigation into the causes for imperfect eyesight and its improvement without the use of artificial lenses."

Some Letters of Approval

The February Better Eyesight barely had time to reach its numerous subscribers before the letters of approval of the proposal for a League began to be received. They came from New York and Missouri, from Virginia and Massachusetts, and from many other places, too. Without exception, their writers hailed the opportunity to enlist in a co-ordinated humanitarian movement to help alleviate a large share of the physical sufferings and discomforts of the world and to promote a general knowledge of the scientific discoveries and cures of Dr. Bates.

Says one letter from Cleveland, Ohio: "I heartily approve of any idea to band together the people who are interested in better eyesight. To assist in getting the truths that Dr. Bates has discovered to the attention 'of the thousands suffering from poor eyesight it is time that we who have been benefitted take a stand that will make the public recognize the possibilities of these truths."

Reads another letter—this one from Kansas City: "I wish to be a member and shall do all that I can to help such a wonderful cause."

Here is an extract from another letter, this one from New York City: "I think it would be a splendid idea to start a Better Eyesight League and will be glad if you will add my name to your list of those interested."

"My best wishes for your success. You may propose me as a member of the Better Eyesight League," writes a practicing physician from another city.

Here is still another letter, and this one, perhaps, best of all expresses the spirit animating these numerous messages of support, as if it were the world of one in the light who wishes to reach out and help those still in darkness:

"I am highly interested in your great proposition concerning a Better Eyesight League. I feet indebted to Dr. Bates who improved not only my eyesight but also my nervous condition; so I naturally wish to do my little bit to bring the life and health message to all others who are in need of it."

Pioneers in a Great Cause

A number of the writers of these letters will be present at the organization meeting in New York. At that meeting the constitution and by-laws of the League will be determined upon and adopted. Officers will be elected, disinterested men and women fired with the same zeal to promote the cause of better eyesight that is expressed in the letters quoted here. Arrangements will be made to insure publicity for the efforts of the League, so that its message of enlightenment may reach the greatest number from the start.

If you who now read this official call for an organization meeting are too far away from New York to be present, at least send in your request for enrollment before March 8th, so that the honor of a Founder may be yours in spite of inability actually to be there; Eight days remain to thus enroll yourself in this great work.

To all the other readers of the magazine(yfthose who live within easy distance of New York—may I, as the original proposer of the Better Eyesight League now say this final word? "Be present at the meeting on March 8th, even though your being there may mean a sacrifice of personal convenience, for the. Better Eyesight League, once formed, can surely add itself to the roster of the world's organizations that are benefitting without gain this generation of mankind!"

THE TRUTH ABOUT FATIGUE

By W. H. Bates, M.D.

This is a true explanation of fatigue. The mystery of fatigue has been one almost equal in the mind of man for ages with the mystery of death. Dr. Bates explains not merely why there is fatigue, but the lack of necessity for it!

ABOUT fifteen years ago I was ambitious to learn how to run long distances. At that time I was, it seemed to me, the poorest runner ever invented. I could not run a mile or even a quarter of a mile. To run a block brought on palpitation of the heart and the loss of breath and fatigue was sickening. One of my dear friends told me it was impossible, that I was too old to attempt it, that it would be disastrous and that if I continued in my foolishness I would drop dead suddenly, without warning. Instead of his discouraging me, I felt an increased incentive to get busy. If I succeeded I could enjoy a conversation with my friend; but, if I failed, dropped dead, the conversation would be necessarily omitted.

At that time I belonged to a gymnasium which had a running track. The physical director promised to find out my faults. He had me run a lap and watched me closely. When I finally arrived at the starting point, all tired out, gasping for breath, he said: "Doctor, you will pardon me, I hope, when I tell you that you did not breathe naturally, but held your breath the whole distance." This knowledge was a great help; but, the strain I was under when running interfered with my breathing and was a more important factor in the cause of "fatigue" than the lack of air.

A few years ago some observations on the pulse, the heart, the breathing before and after a race of about twenty-six miles were published. It was an interesting fact that those who finished close behind the winner had no symptoms of fatigue, loss of breath or weakened action of the heart, while the winner was in better condition at the close of the race than at the beginning. Why? Answer: At the beginning his mind was excited; and, strange to say, because he was confident of winning this great race as he knew that he could run better than any of the men who were entered. And when he had won his mind calmed down and the action of his heart improved in consequence.

Much has been written on the cause of fatigue. A prominent physiologist who had for many years studied the numerous theories, made the statement not long ago: "We do not know now any more about fatigue than we did many years ago."

Running Oneself Into the Ground

I determined to obtain more facts. In one race I ran about eight miles and I made all the effort possible, planning to keep running until I dropped. The experience was valuable. Before I fell I lost all sense of effort, my sight failed, the ground appeared to be rising in front of me, I lost all perception of light, everything was midnight black. I had literally, actually, run myself into the ground. In a few minutes I was conscious. In spite of my protests they carried me away in an automobile.

In another experiment I entered a race of twelve miles. Just as soon as my sight failed I stopped running and walked until my vision was again normal, when I would again run some more. By alternating the walking and running I was able to finish with a sprint. A policeman invited me to sit down. Before I knew it they had me in an ambulance, galloping to the hospital, with me protesting all the way. I have run in many races since, finished in good condition and have escaped the kind attentions of the police and the ambulance service.

I now know the cause of fatigue; I know the remedy. I have cured myself. I have cured others while they in turn have relieved their friends. I can produce excessive fatigue in persons lying quietly in bed without any muscular exertion whatever. The facts are so simple they can be demonstrated by children or by adults who do not wear glasses; but, the most learned eye doctors or the great scientists of the world wearing glasses cannot understand.

A Demonstration With a Period

If possible, with the eyes closed, remember a small letter o with a white centre as white as the whitest snow. Then imagine a small black period on the right edge of the o. Keep the attention on it, or try to see the period continuously for several seconds or for part of a minute. Note that in a few seconds it becomes more and more difficult to hold the period or a small part of the o stationary, the mind becomes tired, the attention wanders, the period disappears and reappears, at times the o is forgotten, and one demonstrates that it is impossible to keep the attention fixed on a point continuously or to remember or imagine the letter o with one part stationary. Or that it is impossible to concentrate on a point, and that trying to do so or trying to do the impossible is a strain which modifies or destroys the memory or imagination, causes discomfort and fatigue. The fatigue produced can be relieved by shifting from one part of the letter to another, when the memory or imagination of the letter again become normal and continuous.

Or, another demonstration: look directly at a small letter which can be seen. Keep on trying to keep the attention fixed on the letter continuously. In a short time, a few seconds, the eyes begin to tire and if the effort is made strong enough, the vision becomes imperfect, and with other disagreeable symptoms much fatigue will be experienced.

Or, still another demonstration: regard a page of fine print at a distance where it is read easily and note the restful feeling. Then hold the page further off or at a near point where the letters are very much blurred. Make as strong an effort as possible to read the letters seen imperfectly. If the effort is strong enough one feels much fatigue. In this way one demonstrates that fatigue can be produced by eye strain.

So many people complain that they do not have time to practice and that they have fatigue. They are less inclined to practice central fixation, the universal swing, the memory of perfect sight and other things which relieve or prevent fatigue. It should be emphasized that one has just as much time to do right as he has to do wrong and it certainly is the wrong thing to go around most of the time suffering from fatigue.

Prevention, Not Relief, for Fatigue

Theories are always wrong. As a working hypothesis the value of simply relieving fatigue is questionable.

I have a vision of the school children of this country able to do their work without discomfort or fatigue. The profession of teaching in the public schools requires much hard work and the teachers are quite properly objects of sympathy. This is all wrong because it can all be corrected. It is possible for people to do the hardest kind of work from early in the morning till late at night without any evidence of fatigue whatever. It is a puzzle for some people to explain how or why so many people are very much fatigued when they first wake up in the morning. Many society people hunt for rest and recreation. They sit in a chair and try to do nothing and wonder why they get so terribly fatigued.

I have repeatedly published that the only time the eye is at rest is when one has or imagines perfect sight. The normal eye when it is at rest is all the time moving. Fatigue is relieved by a universal swing and the relief is instantaneous, demonstrating quite decidedly that fatigue is a mental symptom. I could go on and write much more but after all the matter may be summed up very briefly:

(1) Fatigue is always associated with the imagination of imperfect sight.

(2) Rest or relaxation is always associated with perfect sight or the imagination of perfect sight.

WHAT PALMING DID FOR A BLIND MAN

By By Emily C. Lierman

I HOPE and trust that our readers will forgive me for not waiting until my dear old patient could see a little better, or until I was able to accomplish a little more for him, but in this particular case I feel very much like a child, eager to tell of the most thrilling thing that ever happened in my life.

A few months ago, some time in November, this dear old man came to our clinic, led by another man much younger. They had been told by the clerk that he could not receive treatment there because he did not live in the district. However, the nurse in charge, who is dearly loved by all the patients, did not send him away, but asked him to wait until Dr. Bates had finished with his patients and see what could be done. - After our patients had been attended to, Dr. Bates had a talk with the old gentleman.

The doctor examined him and found that he had all sorts of trouble with the nerves and muscles of his eyes. Dr. Bates then called me and asked me to look at the patient's eyes and also asked me what we could do for him. There he was. absolutely with no sight whatever, but with a smile that went straight to my heart.

A Faith That Will Not Be Denied

Before I go any further I would like all who read to know that if it had been at all possible, Dr. Bates would not have hesitated for one moment, but would have offered to treat the man himself. But it could not possibly be done because Dr. Bates labors daily, Sundays included, at the rate of sixteen hours a day. These poor people, when they hear of Dr. Bates,, come from all over the United States, and we do the best, the doctor included, of course, we can for them.

As the old man held his head up toward our faces waiting to hear us say that he would be able to see again, I made up my mind to make time myself to treat him at our laboratory. Every moment of my time is taken up with our work but there was my lunch hour before clinic on each Saturday that I could devote to his case. I had not the slightest idea that I could ever give him even perception of light or that I would have the intelligence to ever help him see like other people. One could see no iris whatever or pupil in either eye. Each eye had a thick, solid-looking white mass where the iris and pupil should be. But that day we arranged that he should come to see me each Saturday, and that I was to treat him for one hour. I made no promises to him, but said only that I would do all I could for him if he would do his part and carry out the treatment at home.

His age is seventy-four years, I learned, and he is an inmate of the home for the blind in Brooklyn. He said that he was first stricken with blindness in the left eye in the year 1889, and the trouble was neuralgia. In 1898 he was stricken with blindness in the right eye after suffering with chills and fever. During the year of 1898 he could see slightly with the left eye, and until 1920, when his sight gave out completely. He had been treated by noted eye specialists without success.

The first week in December he came to our laboratory, and without thinking, he said, "I am very happy to see you," and I answered very promptly, "And I am happy to see you, also." I found that he was under a terrible tension. The muscles of his arms, especially at the elbows, were so tense that I made up my mind that he would go through some sort of calisthenics with me before we started with the treatment.

Calisthenics at Seventy-four

I called him "Pop" right from the start, and he seemed to like it. Well, you should have seen the poor old fellow throw his hands over his head and try to touch the floor without bending his knees. Of course, he only got half way. Nevertheless, it was a good start. We were very serious in our exercises and to make it appear doubly so to him I went through the exercises with him, guiding him as best I could. I taught him how to palm and to swing his body from side to side as I stood before him, holding his hands, reminding him always to loosen up at the elbows. I told him that anyone could see that he was blind because he stared so much and never seemed to close his eyes, which made his condition worse. So the next thing I taught him was to open and close his eyes often, which we call blinking.

The hour was over and the next time I saw him he was a very happy man. "I have so much to tell you," he said. "The other day, as I went to the washroom I did not feel for the wash basin, but I saw it and I walked over to it. But in my happiness and excitement my vision left me. Why was that, please?" I answered, "You began to strain in your excitement and caused your blindness to return." I encouraged him by saying, "Don't worry, you will be able to see more next time when you are not straining!"

Then, to my surprise, I learned that this dear old fellow has been shaving men's faces by the sense of touch. Before he became blind he was an expert barber. He loves to repeat again and again how he shaved ex-President Taft and other notable men.

Next time he came he was even more interesting. He could not wait to tell me how young he feels now and how he loves to exercise. He gave me a demonstration of how he could touch the floor with his finger-tips without bending his knees, and he did it quite successfully. I was just in the act of praising him for the ability to do such a wonderful trick for a man seventy-four years young, when all of a sudden there was an accident … a button went flying to the opposite side of the room! It broke off from the back of his trousers as he touched the floor with his finger-tips, and poor old "Pop" was more embarrassed than I was.

But the Treatment Goes On

However, we soon remedied the trouble and started in with our treatment. As he had no perception of light in the beginning I was quite thrilled when he pointed to both windows of our room and showed he just where the curtains were fastened. I placed him in another part of the room and I was thrilled again when he pointed with his fingers to a sunbeam shining on the rug. With this progress to encourage me, I now am striving with him to give him his greatest desire—his real eyesight. I cannot understand as yet just how he does see, but I do notice that the white mass in front of the iris is not quite as thick as formerly. The last time I saw him he told me that while he was shaving a man he suddenly saw the man's face and that he also saw another man walking past him who had entered the room quietly. He also told me that the matron of the home had entered his room and as she passed out, he asked the maid if the matron had on a blanket-gray gown, and the maid, knowing that he was blind, was surprised, as she answered, "Yes, it is a blanket-gray color, your sight must be coming back."

What my poor old "Pop" says now that he is most anxious

about is that he may have the pleasure of seeing my face some day. There is a great deal of refinement about my dear old "Pop" and I am always anxious for the hour on Saturday to come to be with him and help him. But, of course, I merely tell him that he must not hope too seriously to see my face for it might make him blind again!

Perhaps some day I will report some further progress made in restoring of this dear old man's eyesight.

NEWS NOTES OF BETTER EYESIGHT

Leslie's Weekly of January 21st, carried an article by Herwesud Carrington, Ph.D, describing the methods and possibilities of the prevention and cure of imperfect eyesight without glasses. The article was written from information supplied practically entirely by Dr. Bates, and scores of thousands of persons read it.

One evening last month, members of the Discussion Club of Grantwood, New Jersey, gathered at the home of Mrs. Emma Hodkinson, listened with great interest for two hours to an exposition of Dr. Bates' methods and an account of some of his cures and experiments by Dr. Bates himself. A number of Mrs. Hodkinson's guests were former patients of Dr. Bates. At the conclusion of his talk. Mrs. H. Kellett Chambers proposed the formation in the future of a local branch of the proposed Better Eyesight League.

Mrs. Martha Smith, who is a registered nurse in Philadelphia, is a devoted servant to the cause of better eyesight. She recently wrote to the proposed Better Eyesight League: "My interest in better eyesight has led me on to the extent of having four lending copies of Dr. Bates' book, 'Cure of Imperfect Sight Without Glasses,' [link] busy all the time, and just before the February Better Eyesight came I had arranged to send two copies to China. One of our nurses taken one to the North of China, and the other goes to the South portion of China. Am I eligible for membership?"

Doctors are needed all over the world to cure people without glasses.

Previous Issue
TMTMTMTMTatPrev Issue
TMTMTMTMNext To Contents Page