October 1923

Better Eyesight

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

October, 1923

Multiple Vision

PERSONS with imperfect sight when they regard one letter of the Snellen Test Card or one letter of fine print instead of seeing just one letter they may see two, three, six or more letters. Sometimes these letters are arranged side by side, sometimes in a vertical line one above the other and in other cases they may be arranged oblique by any angle. Multiple vision can be produced at will by an effort. It can always be corrected by relaxation. One of the best methods is to close the eyes and cover them in such a way as to exclude the light. Do this for five minutes or a half hour or long enough to obtain normal sight. The double vision is then corrected. Practice of the long swing is a great help. When the long swing is done properly the multiple images are always lessened. Do not forget that you can do the long swing in the wrong way and increase the multiple images. One great advantage of the long swing is that it helps you to obtain a slow, short, continuous swing of normal sight. When the vision is normal the letters appear to move from side to side or in some other direction a distance of about a quarter of an inch. The speed is about equal to the time of the moving feet of soldiers on the march. The most important part of the short swing is that it should be maintained easily. Any effort or strain modifies or stops the short swing. Then the eyes begin to stare and the multiple images return. It is a great benefit to learn how to produce multiple images at will because this requires much effort or strain, and is decidedly more difficult than normal single vision which can only be obtained easily without effort.

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

MOST people with imperfect sight when they look at the Snellen Test Card at twenty feet believe that they see imperfectly without any effort or strain. Some people feel that to have perfect sight requires something of an effort. It is interesting to demonstrate that these two beliefs are very far from the truth. As a matter of fact it requires an effort to fail to see and it requires no effort to have normal sight.

In every case of imperfect sight whether due to nearsightedness or to an injury it can always be demonstrated that the nerves of the whole body are under a strain and in every case of perfect vision it can be demonstrated that no effort whatever is made.

1—Remember if you are able, a small letter O perfectly black with a white center, imagined to be as white as snow. When you succeed you will note that it comes easy, quickly and without any manifest effort on your part. You can choose to remember a letter O and you have it. This letter O, if it is perfect, you can always demonstrate or imagine, to be moving and the movement may be so slow, so short, so easy, that you would not have imagined it without having your attention called to the letter. One can remember one perfect letter O or two letter O's, as in the word "good" and at the same time remember or imagine the whole page of letters to be perfectly black, clear and distinct although one is only able to see them best one at a time. Above all it can always be demonstrated that the memory of perfect sight, the imagination and ability to see things perfectly can only come easily, quickly and without effort. Remember a letter O again with a white center as white as snow and imagine on the right edge of it a little black period. Try and keep your attention fixed on that little black period. Try and remember it the blackest part of the O, try and imagine it stationary when not only in the period stationary but also the whole letter O. One can hold this period black for a few seconds or a part of a minute, but, after a short time it becomes monotonous or disagreeable or requires a strain and the period is lost and the O is lost momentarily although you can get it back again. You can demonstrate quite readily that it is impossible to retain in your mind a period or a letter O by trying to imagine it stationary; or by trying to get your attention fixed on one point, or by staring at one point or two points or more points on the letter O, and trying to see them all at once and stationary is trying to do the impossible. You are straining and the result of the strain is that the memory, imagination and vision fail.

We have two classes of patients. One who gets well quickly in a day or at one visit. We have a second class that take their own time about getting well. They are usually under treatment for weeks and months before they recover, if they ever do. Why should some people get well so much quicker than others? One succeeds, the other fails. The facts are that the patient cured in one treatment does at once what he is told to do. He does not think or argue about what he is told to do, at least he does not try to explain why he is asked to do certain things, but simply goes ahead and does it and soon obtains perfect sight. It is something like the bellligerent Irishman who did not know the meaning of the word "convinced," who publicly announced in a loud voice that he was willing to be convinced, but he would like to see the man who could do it. A great many patients are like the Irishman. They are willing to be convinced but they have their club. The club has engraved on it effort, strain, hard work.

When you have imperfect sight and look at the first letter of a line of letters on the Snellen Test Card which you cannot read you can always note that you do not see the first letter or any other letter better than the rest. Usually the whole line looks pretty much the same shade of gray. Why is it? Because you are trying to see the whole line at once. You may not know it but most people can unconsciously demonstrate that they are trying to see the whole line at once. If you hold the card up close where you can readily read the same line you will notice, or you can get somebody with good eyesight to show you, that when you distinguish a letter you do not see any of the other letters so well. To see one letter at a time is much easier than to see a whole line of letters, in fact to see a number of letters all perfectly at the same time is impossible and trying to do it is a strain. One can lift a lead pencil without any apparent effort. To lift a five pound weight requires something of an effort, but to lift ten tons of coal with one hand is impossible, and trying to do the impossible, trying to lift the ten tons of coal with one hand is an effort, a strain, and so it is with the eyesight. You can succeed oftentimes when you look at the Snellen Test Card without any effort to see one letter best at a time, but if you try to do the impossible, try to see the whole line of letters at once you will always fail, because you will have to make an effort. It is not an easy thing at all to fail, it is difficult, you have to try, or you make an effort to do the impossible in order to fail.

This can be demonstrated by nearsighted people who can read fine print close to their eyes. When you see a line of letters you can see one letter better than all the other letters or you can even see part of one letter best while the rest of the letter is not good. Even persons with very good sight for the line print close to the eyes can demonstrate that to make their sight worse or to see worse is not an easy thing to do. It requires a great effort. To prove that imperfect sight is more difficult and requires hard work, a great deal of trouble, and much effort, is a great benefit.

If you close your eyes and remember a letter or word easily, perfectly, continuously, you will find that to spoil the memory or your imagination is a difficult thing to do. Some people cannot read fine print readily, but they can read the Snellen Test Card at twenty feet with normal vision. To be able to look at the large letters on the card and to strain your eyes sufficiently to blur out the large letters is not an easy thing to do. It is difficult to remember, imagine or see imperfectly, to fail.

There are many patients who are convinced that they can remember or imagine with their eyes closed and oftentimes with their eyes open, letters of the Snellen Test Card perfectly black. Many of them can do it all right with their eyes closed, but fail to do it with their eyes open. When they are cured they become able to remember just as easily with their eyes open as they can with their eyes closed. This has suggested a method of treatment which has been highly successful. Many patients ask how long it will take to be cured. The answer is when you can remember or imagine as well with your eyes open as you are able to with your eyes closed.

The Story of Lillian
By Emily C. Lierman

AT one time my work was confined to the Harlem Hospital. After awhile it was extended to other places at other times. Occasionally when I visited a department more to make a purchase, the girl who waited on me might be suffering from the results of eyestrain, pains in the eyes or with headaches. It always gave me great pleasure to give them immediate relief with the aid of palming, swinging or in some other way. I could write many stories about the help I gave these girls and their gratitude was something worth-while. I live in the suburbs and commutes. The trainmen know me very well and always come to me to remove a cinder from their eyes or to help them when their sight is poor, or when they are suffering in any way with their eyes. Every day during the Fall, Winter and Spring I meet a cheerful group of girls at our station, who attend high school in another town. Some of them I have known since they were babies, and while I am in their company on the train, I forget sometimes that I am grown up and join them in their fun. Several of these girls wore glasses and I offered to cure them any time they were willing to discard their glasses. We said no more about the subject until one day just before school closed for the summer, one of the girls, named Lillian, age 16, who had a higher degree of myopia than any of the rest, appealed to me to help her get rid of her glasses. I insisted that she consult her parents first and if they were willing, and would also help me with her case, I would try my best to cure her before school opened again in the fall. Lillian was very much excited about it all, and begged the other girls to discard their glasses also. One girl said her mother feared that such a wonderful thing couldn't be done. Another girl thought she would wait awhile. I still feel in my heart that they did not believe in me. However, the day after school closed, Lillian called at my home with her sister, Rose, age 13. She had a decided squint of her left eye. Lillian had not spoken of Rose or that she had a sister with squint. She was afraid of imposing upon me and for that reason did not mention that her sister also had trouble with her eyes. But when Lillian came to me, Rose made up her mind that she would be cured also and so she came along with her.

I fastened a test card to an oak tree outside of our house and placed my patients two feet from the card. I started Lillian first because I wanted, above all else, to cure her as I had planned. With glasses on she read 10/15 and with glasses off 10/70. I taught her to palm and remember something perfectly while her eyes were closed, such as a white cloud, sunset or a little flower of some kind. She did this for a few minutes and then rested a few minutes and then rested each eye separately. Her vision fortunately was the same in each eye, which made it easy to proceed with the treatment. By closing her eyes and remembering the last letter she saw able to see on the card she became able to read another line, 10/30. When she made the slightest effort to read the smaller letters on the card the letters would disappear. I explained to her, that when she started, she made her sight worse and that was her main trouble. I told her to keep her eyes fixed on one letter without blinking her eyes and see what happened. Immediately she began to frown, her eyelids became inflamed and she complained that her eyes hurt her. She said:

"Now I know why I have headaches and pain in my eyes."

On her second visit her vision improved to 10/20 after I had taught her the long swing, moving her head slowly from side to side from left to right, looking over one shoulder and then the other. She had to be reminded, as all patients do, to stop staring and to blink her eyes often, just as the normal eye does. All through the summer, Lillian practiced faithfully getting a great deal of encouragement from her sister Rose and her loving mother and father. She came to me for treatment about once a week and a few weeks before school opened we began treatment indoors with electric light instead of outdoors in the sunlight. I did this purposely because I knew that the light in school was not as bright as outdoors. Lillian became very nervous and frightened when she first read the test card by electric light. All she could see, was the large C called the 200 line letter, at ten feet. Palming for a few moments helped her to relax enough to read several lines, then with the aid of the swing, and looking at one letter and then shifting her eyes somewhere else and looking back again at the next letter, helped her to read 10/15. At each visit she improved and now reads 10/10 all the time.

Before she began treatment, she had to hold a book while reading, at three inches from her eyes. This was with glasses on. Since she was seven years old she had worn glasses constantly and in all that time she suffered with headaches every day. She told me that from the day I removed her glasses and started the treatment she had not had a headache or pain in her eyes. She is so grateful that I am almost swallowed up with caresses. Some friends whom she had not seen for a year, called to see her folks and to enjoy a day on their farm. Lillian had worn glasses for so many years that she was not at all surprised when her friends did not know her. She stood in the doorway ready to greet them, but they thought she was a stranger. Her whole facial expression had changed. The eyelids which were swollen from eyestrain were natural looking and her large brown eyes were quite different from the tiny marble looking eyes that tried to see through the horrible-thick glasses she had worn previously. When her friends finally recognized her they had to hear all about the treatment and cure.

If Lillian had not been so faithful with the treatment I could not have made such rapid progress. There were many days during the summer when she became discouraged and worried for fear she would have to put on her glasses again. Her mother was a great help to me in many ways. She was very careful to hide Lillian's glasses so that she could not possibly wear them again even if she wanted to.

Well the first day of school came along and of course I was a bit anxious. I met her with the usual group of girls on the train and as she passed me by she pressed my hand and said, "Wish me luck." I asked her to telephone me that evening, which she did. This is what she said:

"When my teachers saw me they were surprised at the great change in my appearance, so I told them all about it and all you did for me. But when I asked to be placed in the last row of seats in each classroom, they were amazed! You see I always had to sit in a front seat near the blackboard," she said, "when I wore my glasses. I was able to read every word on the blackboard in each class room, from the last row of seats where I was sitting. I also read from my readers at eight inches from my eyes without any discomfort whatever."

I praised Lillian and said that I was glad for her. I am more than happy to have given her my time evenings when I needed rest most of all after a day of hard but joyable work.

The interesting history of Rose, Lillian's sister, will appear in the November issue [link].

New Uses for Relaxation
By Bessie Vredenburgh

I HEARD a woman say once that she had followed a certain cult for seventeen years, thoroughly believing in it, but that she had never really put it to the test. This explained what had often been a mystery to me, why certain beliefs and cults could flourish and apparently satisfy so many people, because they were seldom tested.

Not so with the discoveries and teachings of Dr. Bates. They must prove of definite and distinct service, else, they must be discarded, for they make no other appeal than just their own merit. There is no dust thrown in the eyes of the devotees—patients.

This fact was most forcefully brought home to me this summer. I had been greatly benefited by Dr. Bates' treatment in several ways. My eyes responded immediately in that they are now almost cured, but I want to tell of another way in which I was helped, really rescued from the slough of despond and failure. I have suffered many years from a sensitive, irritable skin. Heretofore, this would come in spells and then leave me free again for a little while. I say free, I mean comparatively speaking, for I always was troubled with it more or less. Either the sun was too hot and it became inflamed, or it was too cold and it got chapped and so inflamed, or the wind irritated it or warm clothing; most anything, in fact could cause me trouble.

Of late years it came to stay longer each time so that the periods of so-called freedom became less and less. I tried everything I could hear of to do. Doctors seemed to prefer to let me worry along by myself rather than attempt to cure me beyond suggesting certain diets, etc. I tried mental healing of various kinds also.

To make a very long story short, when I began practicing Dr. Bates' methods for improving my vision I found it rested and relaxed my nerves and also my skin.

I was so much better that I determined to take a little trip that I had wanted to take for some time, but I happened on a terribly hot wave!

My first stop was at St. Louis, and I thought I had never been in a hotter place in my life. The irritation of my skin became intense and my arms, hands, face and neck were red and swollen.

I had a wait of two and a half hours at St. Louis before taking the sleeper on for a point further west. The station was full of hot perspiring people, of all ages and races. I was covered with train dust and perspiration and just about crazy. I realized that I had to get better or go back home, as I couldn't go on like that. I determined to get the short swing more completely than I had ever been able to get it and give it a thorough trial.

I left the hot sultry station and went out into the equally hot and blistering streets, but I had more freedom outside. There I walked for two hours, slowly round and round, trying to maintain the swing. I thought I never could do it. I was under such a strain it seemed utterly impossible to relax. Then when I got a bit of relaxation it seemed as if I couldn't maintain it long enough to get much benefit. But more and more I got it until I felt a great peace and relief. When I finally got on my train for the next step of my journey, I was feeling quite comfortable for the first time in many hours. I was a long way from being entirely cured, but I was better, so that I could continue to get better and have one of the most delightful vacations I have ever had. I stood with equanimity a daily temperature of 110 degrees in the shade. I was out in the open fields, and so in the sun most of the time and did nothing to ease myself from what a person with a normal skin would do. I believe that I could have a normal skin at all times if I would continuously do as Dr. Bates suggested to me; but I forget it so often, and sometimes it seems easier to just let myself get nervous and my skin irritated than it is to try to relax. But it isn't easier in the end, and I envy people who have stronger wills than I have. For all the most wonderful methods in the world won't help those who fail to put them into practice.

Minutes of the Better Eyesight League
August Meeting

THE meeting of the Better Eyesight League was very successful, although it came in the middle of the vacation season. The large Central Fixation office was filled to capacity.

The regular officers were still on their vacations, and Miss Saunders informally opened the meeting. Many questions were asked of Dr. Bates, the most important of which are answered on the question and answer page of this magazine.

Miss Gertrude Berdine was the speaker selected for the meeting. She told in a very interesting manner how she wore glasses for ten years, and was able to discard them by practicing Dr. Bates' method under Dr. Amans. She accomplished reading her music in two weeks' time after leaving off her glasses. She was bothered with headaches and said the swing and sun helped her. She very rarely has a headache now.

Dr. Cornelia Browne of East Orange spoke of the recent post office investigation, and explained to the meeting how every member could help by stating in a letter to Mr. Keene, the benefits received from Dr. Bates' method. She said that this was the opportunity for the members to get together and turn the investigation into a boomerang.

Many of those present at the last few meetings were not regular members of the Better Eyesight League, but just came to find out more about Dr. Bates' method of treating imperfect sight. The regular members have probably told these new friends about the work, and invited them to come, but we want all the old members to attend the meetings and be kept up on the latest developments. Now that vacation time is over, we hope to continue with the good work, and have all the old members attend regularly.

The Post Office Incident

[EDITOR'S NOTE]—About two months ago the Post Office noticed that we were sending an increasing number of books through the mails. They did their duty and investigated the facts by writing to a number of purchasers of the book. The following is a partial list of letters written to the postmaster, duplicates of which were submitted to us, and are printed at this time for the encouragement of those who desire good vision without glasses. We are grateful to the writers of all letters sent to the Post Office.

"I WAS wearing spectacles for twenty-seven years. A friend of mine made me acquainted with the discovery of Dr. Bates. I bought the book, read it very carefully, and began the exercises and cured myself by following closely the directions stated in the book without consulting Dr. Bates; therefore, from the very day that I began the exercises prescribed in the book I discarded my spectacles and I never had the need of them any more. My eyes by the continual use of the spectacles had acquired a lifeless expression. They now look bright and have acquired their natural expression of my young days. I read, write and use them with remarkable comfort for anything that I must do. I recommended the same book to a friend of mine in Nassau, N. Y. Her children and husband, an architect by profession, were wearing spectacles, and they also cured themselves only with the knowledge of the book, and the application of the exercises, in a remarkably short time.

"I am living at ———— for more than fifteen years and therefore my testimonial can be O.k'd. by many persons and acquaintances. I consider a blessing for the future generation the marvelous discovery of Dr. Bates, and personally I will do all that is in my power to impress on my friends the scientific and accurate importance of such valuable work done with altruistic and humanitarian spirit by Dr. Bates.

"If anyone fails to have results it is only because they do not work it out accurately, continuously and conscientiously. The blame, therefore, is in their nature and not in the value of the theory. I hope my testimonial will help the future and present generation to get the just attitude and give support and value to such a remarkable discovery."

"I HAVE been interested in Dr. Bates' method of treatment for the eyes, for several years, and have known Dr. Bates personally for one year.

"From the results obtained by my patients through the use of his book and methods, I am convinced that he is right in his conclusions, and I have always found him thoroughly honest and reliable in his business methods and also in the sale and delivery of his books."

"I HAVE enjoyed considerable mental comfort and, I believe, considerable practical benefit from the work in following the instructions. The "palming" process and the mental suggestions/connected with it have been followed with pleasure and profit. Dr. Bates' observation with regard to cataracts in some recorded instances having passed away was very encouraging. Believing to the fullest extent in the doctrine that what comes of its own volition should seemingly disappear either similarly or with care, I have been extracting considerable relief from the belief which amounts to a conviction.

"As I have been nearly forty-seven years a practicing attorney you can rest assured that I am neither an infant nor a neophyte, but like the man from Missouri I must be shown and convinced. Dr. Bates has presented certain lines of thought worthy at least of investigation and consideration. I can well understand how efforts may be made to thwart him but with me if his position is untenable it will soon be discovered and so proven. At the present time I can only speak in the most encouraging manner of the work and of his suggestions."

"IN reference to enclosed letter, I did write for 'Perfect Sight Without Glasses' and sent it on to my wife, as I thought it might interest her. I have not taken the treatment, but intend to do so the next time I take a vacation from business.

"My wife wore glasses for 29 years. Dr. Bates told her to take them off and since that time, over a year ago, she has not worn them, and can see better and longer than when she wore glasses. She is free from headaches she experienced when she wore glasses.

"I believe that Dr. Bates is sincere and that he is working on really scientific lines. I believe that he has been persecuted by narrow-minded physicians who resent any change in the fundamentals of their science. I was as skeptical as could be of Dr. Bates and investigated thoroughly before I allowed my wife to take the treatment, and I am now thoroughly convinced that his method is the correct one in the majority of cases.

"I should be very glad to be of any further assistance in protecting Dr. Bates or the Central Fixation Publishing Company, which, I understand, is his organization, from any interference by the Government.

"Please understand that I have no connection or interest in the Central Fixation Publishing Company. My only motive is that of gratitude because Dr. Bates did so much for my wife and made it possible for my little daughter to do without glasses."

"I HAVE heard the optometrists and the oculists 'knocking' the system and have asked each one of the known knockers if they had tried the system. Each said "No." They are the ones who are jealous.

"I have known of very many who have been benefited beyond casual belief by Dr. Bates' system. Of course it is radical. All reforms seem radical till once adopted by the majority. As a rule the discoverer of anything good in the healing "art" has to be dead for about fifty years before he is given due credit for his work."

"I WAS treated for an acute condition of the left eye in the spring of 1922. I was suffering acute pain from the least ray of light, could not bandage my eye closely enough to walk on the street without agony because light would get in, had to ride in a closed taxi cab. Dr. Bates examined my eyes for over an hour, then prescribed immediate exercises which I took in the office, remaining another forty-five minutes to do it. My eye which had been in this inflamed painfully acute condition for five days, was relieved after fifteen minutes. I could see in twenty minutes without great pain, in forty-five minutes I could bear to look at light. I continued the exercises at home by his prescription and my eyes were normal in three or four days' time."

"THROUGH your 'Perfect Sight Without Glasses' I not only could throw mine away almost at once after I began to read your book last Thanksgiving, but the effects of your splendid relaxation system on my high-strung nerves is beyond words."

Announcement

The November issue will contain the minutes of the September and October meetings, and from then on the minutes will appear in the following month's issue.

The League will meet on the 9th of October, 383 Madison Avenue, 8 o'clock.

The Question Mark
Questions and Answers taken from The Better Eyesight League Meeting

Question—Can anything be done for night blindness?
Answer—It can be cured by sun gazing.
Question—What can be done for a man, blind for fifteen years who cannot well light from darkness?
Answer—Same treatment as is used for myopia and other defects.
Question—How can we see things moving without making an effort ?
Answer—Things only move when one is relaxed. An effort always stops things from moving.
Question—Why do "movies" hurt my eyes when they should benefit them?
Answer—Unconscious strain. Do not stare at the picture, but allow the eyes to roam over the whole picture, seeing one part best. Also keep things swinging.
Question—Why do some people see better by partly closing their eyes?
Answer—People with poor sight can see better by partly closing their eyes, but when they have perfect sight, squinting makes it worse. This is a good test for the vision of ordinary objects.
Question—When does the long swing fail to produce relaxation?
Answer—When one stares at objects moving.

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