October 1924

Better Eyesight

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

October, 1924

The Rabbit's Throat

DURING the past ten years a method of breathing has been practiced which has improved the vision of many patients after other methods had failed. It consists of depressing the lower jaw with the lips closed and lowering the tongue and muscles below the chin. At the same time one breathes in through the nose and throat in a manner somewhat similar to snoring and when done properly one can feel a coolness of the air while it passes down into the lungs. This method of breathing is accompanied with the eyelids being more widely open in a natural way without staring. The ear passages, nose, and throat dilate. The tube which goes from the throat to the middle ear becomes more widely open, with improved hearing in chronic deafness which does not respond to any other treatment. If one rests the chin with the thumb below it and the forefinger just below the lower lip, one can feel with the thumb the hardening of the muscles below the jaw accompanied with a decided swelling. By practice, the swelling and hardness increase. This suggested the title of the Rabbit's Throat because of a similar swelling below the rabbit's chin. The tension of the other muscles of the body becomes relaxed. There is a wonderful increase of muscular control.

Music teachers have told me that the singing voice becomes much better because of the relaxation of the muscles of the throat. The involuntary muscles of the digestive tract become relaxed in a striking manner with the relief of many symptoms of discomfort. Redness and inflammation of the mucous membranes of the eye, ear, nose and throat and the rest of the body are relieved in a few minutes with the aid of the Rabbit's Throat.

Imagination Cures

By W. H. Bates, M.D.

THE normal eye when it has normal sight IMAGINES it sees many illusions. When the normal eye sees one small letter of the Snellen Test Card on the bottom line, it can be demonstrated that a Swing from side to side can be imagined. If the letter does not appear to swing or if the swing is stopped, consciously or unconsciously, the vision becomes imperfect.

The White Spaces between the lines of letters are always seen whiter than they really are. This is of course an illusion that the normal eye is able to imagine.

With normal vision the Form of each letter is imagined correctly. For example: if the letter O is a perfect circle and is imagined to be an oval with the long axis vertical or horizontal the imagination of the O will not be as perfect as when the O is imagined to be a circle.

When a word is regarded, the letters are sometimes apparently transposed, and when this illusion is imagined the vision is always imperfect.

Size: If a letter is imagined much larger than it really is, it can be demonstrated that the vision is imperfect; if the letter is imagined smaller than it really is, the vision is also lowered.

Normal vision can only be demonstrated when one sees a part of a letter best, the other parts of the letter being blurred.

The eye with imperfect sight has also an Imperfect Memory of a letter, its form, size or location. The white background or the spaces between the lines are less white than the margin of the card.

The stare can always be demonstrated.

The swing is also modified, being either too short, too long, too rapid, too slow, irregular and not continuous. These facts have suggested methods of treatment which have been very successful.

The best Distance to practice with the Snellen Card varies widely. If no improvement is manifest in a few minutes, it is well to try practicing the vision of a letter on one card at a near point where the vision is good and to Flash the more distant card alternately.

One patient, a girl aged 18, had myopia of concave 4.00 D.S. Practicing without her glasses at fifteen feet did not improve her sight. The card was brought closer, to six feet, where her vision was 6/70. She held another card in her hand and practiced looking at the first letter of the 10 line, a letter F, at one foot where she could see it quite perfectly with a slow, short, easy swing, and at the same time imagine her body was swinging with the F. This she became able to do by moving her head and eyes. Later she imagined the swing of the F without having to move her head. She alternately regarded the F at the near point and imagined her body was swinging with the F and then flashed the first letter of each line of the Snellen Card at six feet without modifying or stopping the swing of her body. Her vision rapidly improved so that she became able to read the 10 line at six feet. The card was then placed at fifteen feet and by practicing in the same way she became able to read all the letters without stopping the body swing. She then practiced with cards that she had never seen before and was able to read the bottom line as quickly on the strange card as she could on a familiar one. When she looked at the large letters at first she unconsciously made an effort, stopped her swing and failed to read them. By looking between the lines of letters and planning to test her swing without testing her sight, she was able to maintain the swing of the letter F at the swing of her body, swinging with the letter F, which improved her vision decidedly. She had more trouble in reading the larger letters than she had in reading the small letters on the bottom line.

A very interesting case called recently, a woman aged 63. She complained that the doctors had repeatedly urged her to wear glasses for reading but none of the glasses gave her any benefit. When she looked at the Snellen Card at twenty feet she could read the bottom line without any trouble, and it seemed to her, that the letters were always moving and that this was something wrong with her eyes. It took me about half an hour to prove that the movement of the letters was necessary and that when she tried to stop the movement, her vision always became worse. In her business she had to read very fine print most of the time. I tested her with fine print and found that she could read it perfectly as close as six inches and as far off as she could hold it. Then I asked her: "How do your eyes trouble you?"

"They don't trouble me at all when I forget about them, but when I notice what happens when I am reading it troubles me a great deal. I found that even a small letter regarded is moving. If I try to stop it from moving it disappears and my eyes feel uncomfortable. I can usually read page after page without any trouble but if I try to increase my speed by reading a whole sentence at a time, it causes me a great deal of discomfort."

Again it required some time to have her demonstrate that when she read with perfect comfort she read without any effort; as soon as she made an effort to see, she lowered her vision and produced headache or pain in her eyes. In various ways I emphasized the fact that when she had normal vision it came without any effort to see, but to see imperfectly required an effort and the greater the effort she made the less did she see and the more uncomfortable did she feel. I told her repeatedly that she had perfect eyes. There was no disease of the retina, there was no disease of her optic nerves and she had no sign of a cataract. The doctors also complained that her sight was too good and that she must be under a terrible strain to see so well; and, when she replied that she did not have any discomfort when her sight was normal she got into an argument which was more disagreeable than beneficial.

I think I helped this patient a great deal by just telling her the facts, that she had normal eyes and that she knew how to use them.

It is interesting to know how many cures with normal vision are their eyes wrong and suffer from pain, fatigue, imperfect sight or other eye discomforts.

The imagination is a very important factor in vision. One can, by imagining a letter imperfectly, increase the hardness of the eye ball immediately, which is an important symptom of Glaucoma. Conversely, the imagination of a letter seen perfectly softens the eye ball in Glaucoma with great benefit to pain and imperfect sight of this disease.

Imagination of imperfect sight has produced cloudiness of the lens or increased the opacity of the lens in Cataract. In Myopia the eye ball is elongated. The imagination of perfect sight is accompanied immediately by a shortening of the globe to normal, and the patient obtains, temporarily at least, improved or perfect sight. One can produce Myopia by the imagination of imperfect sight In Hypermetropia the eye ball is shortened. The imagination of perfect sight is followed by the lengthening of the eye ball to normal, and the patient may have normal vision temporarily. The imagination of imperfect sight for near always lessens the length of the eye ball, produces or increases Hypermetropia. All forms of Astigmatism can be produced or increased by the imagination of imperfect sight. They are all cured temporarily or permanently by the imagination of perfect sight.

Wonderful cures have been accomplished, after all other methods had failed, of many eye diseases by the proper use of the imagination.

Stories from the Clinic

NO. 56: SCHOOL CHILDREN

By Emily C. Lierman

PUBLIC school children come to the clinic in great numbers throughout the whole year and are eager to be cured without glasses. Not always does the child have a guardian or mother near to encourage him while he is waiting to be treated. Sometimes they come alone, and sometimes with three or four other children.

At the office the Doctor sees the patient for one-half hour or more, but those at the clinic can have only five minutes or a little longer, at the time is short on clinic days. School children are cured quickly, however, whether it be at the office or at the clinic. When they discover that they can be cured without glasses, we have very little trouble in treating them. They are always eager to discard their glasses, with a few exceptions, of course. Some children feel dressed up in them, because their parents wear attractive ones with gold or tortoise shell rims. Occasionally these people come to have their glasses readjusted and the doctor finds that these are often practically window pane glass, without any strength whatever.

A little girl named Betty, aged 13 years, usually found a convenient corner of our room where she could see each patient having their eyes treated. She had no trouble with her eyes, but always came with her school chum who was under treatment. She listened attentively as I encouraged the patients but never was troublesome nor asked any questions at any time. Somehow she obtained a Snellen Test Card and helped some of her playmates recover their vision. She brought several of them to me to be sure that they could get along without their glasses. One of them was a boy twelve years old named John, who had worn glasses for five years and was very nearsighted. At the age of seven, the school doctor ordered glasses for him. Dr. Bates examined them and discovered that the boy was wearing farsighted glasses for myopia, or nearsight. When they were changed one year before, the optician who sold them, had made a terrible error. No wonder Johnnie was willing to have Betty help him. She told me that he could only see the 50 line of the card ten feet away without his glasses. When I tested Johnnie he placed himself fifteen feet away from the card and read every line of letters without a mistake. Then he told me how Betty spent an hour with him almost every day for three weeks until he became able to read the card at any distance Betty desired him to read it. I'm sorry she stopped coming to the clinic. Her parents moved away and I lost a very good assistant.

Then a mother came to the clinic with her two little girls. Marjorie, the oldest, had been to us some years previously and was cured. The youngest child was sent home by the school nurse and was told to see a doctor about her eyes. Dr. Bates told the mother to wait for me and when I was ready, I would test the children's eyes. The mother kept looking at me, smiling all the while. She asked, "Don't you remember me? Don't you remember my little girl? I brought her to you and Dr. Bates six years ago. She had alternate squint when she was three years old and Dr. Bates cured her without an operation." Hundreds of cases had been treated and cured in that time, and this dear little girl had grown from a wee tot of three years to a big girl of nine. The mother waited patiently for me to say yes. I tried my very best to remember, for my memory is usually good, but I failed this time. Before I knew it I answered, "Yes, surely I remember." How grateful this mother was because I did not forget her child and how sorry I was because I told a fib. She just knew that I would not forget, so I could not convince her that I did. If Dr. Bates had had his retino-scope handy, he would have found that I was made nearsighted by telling the fib. When one tells an untruth, the retinoscope always reveals the fact.

Marjorie's both eyes were as straight as mine, but everyone in the clinic who would listen to the mother that day, heard how we had cured her child of cross eyes.

Her sister Katherine, aged 7 years, stood by, wondering what we were going to do with her. Both girls were dressed with the greatest of care and Katherine looked very much like a big French doll with her head just covered with curls. Dr. Bates examined her and said she had myopia but was not a bad case. I placed her ten feet from the test card and she read every letter correctly down to the forty line. As I walked over to where the card was placed to assist my little patient, the mother got ahead of me, and in a soft tone of voice, encouraged Katherine to palm and remember the last letter of the forty line of the card. Katherine did so, but she had only covered her eyes for a minute when she removed her hands and opened her eyes to read again. I wanted to tell the child that she had not palmed long enough but before I could say a word, she began to read the next line of letters as her mother pointed to each one. After each letter was read, her mother very gently told her to blink and that would help her to see the next letter without a strain.

The mother did not stop when Katherine finished reading all of the thirty line without a mistake, but kept right on to the next line, pointing to one letter and then another until she read all of the twenty line.

Then the mother advised Katherine to swing her body from side to side and to notice that everything in the room seemed to move in the opposite direction. While her mother was advising her what to do, the child did the best she could to read the card. The mother smiled when she saw how amazed I was to see her improve Katherine's eyes without my help. I asked: "Where did you learn how to do it?" She answered: "From reading your articles in the Better Eyesight Magazine. I have been a subscriber for a number of years."

Some months later the mother called with Katherine to learn if she was cured. Her vision was 10/10 in each eye. It is interesting to report that the child was cured entirely by her mother.

The Method in England

(We have been extremely encouraged by the reports sent in from time to time by our English correspondents. No one is professionally using Dr. Bates method in England, yet the results obtained by book patients have justified the opening of a Better Eyesight Clinic.

Miss Taylor's interesting letter to Dr. Bates explains the origin of the Clinic. Her first-hand information from Head-Quarters then is typical of the various reports sent to us.)

Dear Dr. Bates:—

I AM so glad I got those addresses from you before I left New York. I have had the most interesting time and want to tell you about it as I am sure you and Mrs. Lierman will be interested.

I found Captain Price was out of town for several weeks but I saw his friend, Major Galloway, who is on the Council of the Better Eyesight League over here. I introduced myself as a former patient and friend of yours and Mrs. Lierman's and he was just as nice as he could be, and told me all about the work they are trying to do. He said I must see Miss K. Berwick who is Capt. Price's assistant, and was the one who got him interested in the beginning. I invited Miss Berwick to tea and she told me how everything began. It seems her mother had been blind from glaucoma for 8 years and they had tried everything including operations, without success. All she had was perception of light. Someone suggested they try osteopathy for her general health so she took her to a well known American here. He gave her treatment of course, but also told her about the wonderful discoveries of an American, Dr. Bates, and said he had bought your book and before he had had time to read it a patient noticed it and borrowed it. The patient had myopia but cured it in three weeks with the book. Miss Berwick bought the book, went to see the woman who had cured herself and then began on her mother. That was six months ago. I met the mother a few days ago. She took up a magazine and read the big print for me, very slowly of course. Then she told me I had on a brown dress and was dark myself. As you know my skin is dark to begin with and now I am almost black from sunburn. Then I walked down the street with her. She avoided the people all right. She could see the curb to step up but not to step down which was exactly my trouble when I first took off my glasses. Once we came to a place where the pavement changed from dark to light and she thought it was a step-down, which is natural enough.

When Miss Berwick saw her mother's improvement she told her friend Capt. Price about it. He tried it and immediately saw the wonders of it so both of them began to practice on all their friends. When they felt more confident they opened a clinic with three patients. That was last April and now they have forty. Capt. Price is going to send you a report on the clinic cases in a few months. They have had some wonderful successes. I asked Miss Berwick how it was possible they could know how to treat patients with no more to go on than your book and a few letters from you. She said the explanation of course, was that it was the truth that you had discovered and it worked.

I will tell you a few of the cases to give you an idea of what they have done in this short time.

Some of the quick temporary cures were:

Man, myopic, has worn glasses long time. Sight very blurred 10/200. In twenty minutes read 10/40 with ease. When he went home his family persuaded him he had been hypnotized so he has never returned.

Boy, 6 years old, had squint in one eye, vision faint 10/200, other eye normal. In less than an hour read 10/10 with bad eye on strange card. The squint was cured temporarily for a few seconds at a time. Has had only that visit but will return after the holidays.

Miss Berwick said Miss Clutterbuck was the only person she had met who knew you so she asked all about you and your work. She wanted to know if Mrs. Lierman was as charming as her articles in the magazine, and I told her she was even more so.

It is wonderful what they are doing to make the method known. Capt. Price is being asked to speak in some of the big cities and Miss Berwick too.

Miss Berwick has one or two friends who are members of Parliament. She has gotten them interested and they are working with the Ministry of Health and Education to get the system installed in the schools. She was formerly a teacher in London and she has friends who are working with the London County Council and the hopes before long to get it included in the course required at the normal schools for Teachers run by the County Council. One big London high school has already installed it.

Recently a delegation was sent to England from the German Government to investigate the most modern ideas in education in England and to report with recommendations for the German schools. Miss Berwick's friend who is in Parliament suggested that the head of the delegation see Miss Berwick with regard to your method as applied to school children. He had several interviews with her.

Several doctors are using the method and are on the Council of the Better Eyesight League, but the medical profession as a whole have not waked up to what is going on. Miss Berwick expects great opposition when they do. In the meantime she hopes the League will be in a strong position with titled people on the Council, etc. She has already gotten an article in a well known magazine of the "Save the Children Fund," which is backed by the biggest medical men in the country and that has given the method prestige.

You mark my words it will be just like adrenalin and will come to the United States from England before the A. M. A. has finished their attacks on you. If you only live long enough I believe you will have the Nobel prize. I am leaving London in a few days but I expect to see Miss Berwick again. Please show this letter to Mrs. Lierman if she can read it.

Yours very sincerely,

(Signed) MARY M. W. TAYLOR

The Magic Carpet

By George Guild

A LITTLE boy wearing a black velvet suit with a large collar which covered his shoulders was getting very restless. His nurse was trying to guide him through the crowded streets and while she held his hand and helped him along, the velvet suit with the white collar seemed perfectly willing to go with her but the large tortoise shell-trimmed eye glasses that he was wearing over his painful eyes dragged him always in the wrong direction. The little boy with his beautiful clothes was quite frequently hanging up against rough men who knocked him to one side and every lamp post that he met welcomed him with a bang that made him cry out with pain. Finally he became so tired that he could not stand up any longer and dropped down to the curbstone and sat there for quite a while in spite of the efforts of his nurse to drag him further. When the nurse was not looking, her attention being attracted to a young soldier, a nice old man with a queer hat spoke to the little boy pleasantly, sympathetically and so kindly that the little boy looked up into his face and tried to smile. The nice old man gave him a handful of candy to eat while he led him away from the nurse and sat him down on a nice green carpet in a neighboring room. The little old man came and sat down beside the little boy and told him the story about the Magic Carpet. When you sat on the magic carpet and said a little prayer and then called out loud some place where you would like to go, the carpet would carry you there very quickly. The little old man said to the little boy: "When you are tired of staying here just say a little prayer that your mother taught you, call where you want to go and you will soon be there."

The little boy said his mother was a very wealthy and important person and did not have any time to teach her little boy to say his prayers. He was so disappointed that he burst into tears and cried and cried. The little old man tried to comfort him and said: "Never mind little boy I will say a little prayer and I will say where you want to go and then we will have a nice time going there."

Then the little old man said a little prayer and said out loud that he wanted to go to the home of the little boy in the black velvet suit. Right away the carpet rose from the floor, moved out of the doorway and up toward the sky. It all seemed so wonderful, so new, so pleasant, so agreeable and the louder he laughed the more he clapped his hands, the better did he become able to see. In a very short time the carpet arrived on the lawn of a very beautiful house which was where the little boy lived. Then the little old man said to the little boy: "How is your sight?" The little boy scowled and said: "The doctor told me I must wear my glasses all the time."

The little old man removed the glasses from the little boy and said: "Wouldn't you like to see perfectly without your glasses?" This seemed a new idea to the little boy but a very pleasant one and he smiled.

The little old man then told him some nice stories about fairies and about nice little boys who grew up and became very nice big men when they learned to say a prayer at night that their mothers taught them. The little boy was rudely shaken and he awoke and found that he was leaning against a lamp post, the little old man and the carpet were gone and the crowds were greater than ever. His nurse cried: "Where are your glasses?" The little boy said:

"I never want to wear those horrid things again because the little old man told me that I would feel a great deal happier if my eyes were cured without glasses." He looked up into his nurse's face and smiled and said: "Do you suppose I could get mother to teach me a little prayer when I go to bed at night?" The nurse was shocked and shook him some more but she could not shake the smile from his face or the happiness from his heart because he found that he could see without his glasses a great deal better than he had ever been able to see before with them.

Bates Method a Success in Schools

The following report was submitted by Mr. Husted, Superintendent of the North Bergen Schools. He is a pioneer in eye education in schools, and in spite of critical opposition and halfhearted co-operation, has had remarkable success with it.

EARLY in October, 1919, the Superintendent of North Bergen Schools directed our school nurse, Miss McNamara, to take a Snellen Test of the eyes of all of our pupils. A novel health experiment was begun, a campaign for "Better Eyesight." In June a second test was made in order to measure the extent of progress in this phase of health work. The June test of 1920 shows marvelous, practical, successful results. Only the scepticism of principals, teachers and pupils and lack of complete faithfulness in carrying out its conditions, prevented the wonderful results achieved from paralleling those of an Arabian Nights Tale.

A Snellen Test Card is placed permanently in the room. The children are directed to read the smallest letter they can see from their seats at least once every day, with both eyes together and with each eye separately, the other being covered with the palm of the hand in such a way as to avoid pressure on the eye ball. Those whose vision is defective are encouraged to read it more frequently, and in fact need no encouragement to do so after they find that the practice helps them to see the blackboard, and stop the headaches, or other discomfort previously resulting from the use of their eyes.

1923 RECORDS

Special effort for exactness in Records has been an aim in 1923. Out of 3,636 pupils receiving both first and final tests, 741 pupils were found below the Normal Standard of 20/20 or 19/9., and of these, 565 were present at the second examination test which showed 234 of them or 52% having improved sight. As the percentage of pupils below standard becomes less, the same percentage of Better Sight gains became more difficult as the more serious cases carry over to the following year and are less amendable to treatment and should therefore receive special persistent and systematic attention.

Not only does this work place no additional burden upon the teachers, but, by improving the eyesight, health, disposition and mentality of their pupils, it surely lightens their labors.

CURATIVE RESULTS AND RECORDS, 1924

A different plan for eyesight conservation was followed for 1923-1924. Every class room in North Bergen Schools, Grades II-VIII became a Conservation of Vision Class. Each class room was visited by the Superintendent and the Values of Good Eyesight for pupils were dwelt upon. The method to be used in its attainment was carefully explained. Our Nurses were invited to attend several of these class room talks. Pupils with good sight volunteered to aid those with defective eyes during this special campaign To Educate the Eye To FUNCTION WITHOUT STRAIN and thus prevent and cure defective vision. Pupils have engaged in this work with a helpful enthusiasm and teachers with a renewed interest. As this work is a physical training for the education of the eye, teachers were instructed to use some time assigned to Physical Training or Hygiene to guide the Below Normal Vision pupils to sufficient proper eye practice for Curative effects and the Normal Vision ones to sufficient practice for Preventive defects.

Great care has been taken to make these reports accurate. The tests were all made by two nurses assisted by the class room teacher and the reports were all made under Nurse supervision. That 68% or 782 pupils have improved, 542 of them or 43.7% to the degree of Normal Vision is certainly a wonderful and worthwhile bit of health care work and is indicative of what may be attained by this educative process under more systematic, intelligent and persistent practice.

Report of the September Meeting

A REGULAR meeting of the Better Eyesight League was held on September 9th at 383 Madison Avenue. A large attendance indicated renewed interest in the work of the League.

Miss Harry, president, presided. After a short business program the president discussed the aim of the League and of Dr. Bates' method. Instruction in palming was then given by the officers.

Dr. Bates emphasized the importance of the personal equation in applying his method. Relaxing proves most helpful in some cases, swinging in others, and the use of the imagination in others.

Mr. M. F. Husted, Superintendent of Schools in North Bergen, New Jersey, reported the result of his having used Dr. Bates' Method to reduce retardation among pupils in his district. As a means to this end the method proved highly successful; furthermore, the lessening of retardation among pupils made possible a reduction in the educational budget. Last fall 4,155. children in Mr. Husted's district were examined and 1,244 cases of defective vision were recorded. During the year the pupils were merely encouraged to read the Snellen Card daily. At the close of the year 43.7% of the defective cases had attained normal vision, while 21.8% showed marked improvement. The cases of defective vision included 129 in which glasses were used; 75% of these cases were greatly improved.

Mrs. Lierman discussed the work of her clinic. Six months ago one clinical case was diagnosed as total blindness; this girl now reads the Snellen Card at two feet. Mrs. Lierman reported improved vision also in a case of cataract in a woman seventy-eight years of age and improved condition in a case of drooping eyelid in a five-year-old boy.

The meeting was adjourned at the close of Mrs. Lierman's report

Questions and Answers

Question—I find conscious blinking a strain, because I close my eyes temporarily and seem to hold the eyeball stationary. If I shut my eyes for a longer period would that be blinking?

Answer—No; the normal eye blinks consciously or unconsciously without effort, without strain and quickly.

Question—You mention the black period in your book. Must this be any particular size? I only imagine large round black objects like cannon balls, the centre of a target, or a moving football. This is restful, but is it beneficial?

Answer—No. Anything that is restful is beneficial.

Question—My little daughter has temporary perfect sight while palming, but her eyes turn in when she plays excitedly or strenuously. I thought play was relaxing.

Answer—Play may be relaxing and should be beneficial, but like other things, it can be done wrong with a great effort, without benefit.

Question—Please give me a simple demonstration or example of the swing. I cannot see objects moving when I know they are stationary.

Answer—When you ride in a railroad train which is traveling fast, and look out the window, you may see the telegraph poles and other objects moving in the opposite direction.

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