May 1924

Better Eyesight

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

May, 1924

Time to Practice

MANY busy people complain that they have not time to practice my methods. They say that wearing glasses is quicker
and much easier. Persons with normal vision or perfect sight without glasses are practicing consciously or unconsciously all the time when they are awake. When one sees a letter or an object perfectly the eyes are at rest. Any effort to improve the sight always makes it worse. The only time the eyes are perfectly at rest is when the vision is perfect. Persons with imperfect sight have to strain in order to see imperfectly. Pe-vuss with headaches, pain and other symptoms of discomfort in the eyes or in other parts of the body are under a constant strain to see, which is usually unconscious.
When a patient says he has no time to practice he is mistaken. He has all the time there is to use his eyes in the right way, or he can use them in the wrong way. He has just as much time to use his eyes properly as he has to use them improperly. He has the choice and when patients learn the facts, to complain that they have no time to practice is an error.
Some patients object to removing their glasses on the ground that their vision is not sufficiently good for them to attend to their work, and feel that they have to put off the treatment until they have a vacation. Some of my patients have very poor vision and yet find time to practice without their glasses. Some school teachers with 15 diopters of myopia with a vision of less than 10/200 have found time to practice without interfering with their work. In fact practicing without their glasses soon enabled them to do their work much better than before.

Conical Cornea
By W. H. Bates, M.D.

CONICAL Cornea has been considered for many years to be incurable. It is usually progressive and in advanced cases besides very imperfect sight, many patients suffer with disagreeable symptoms of pain and inflammatory troubles of the cornea. Numerous operations have been performed without any im-provement in the Blight. In the beginning the corneas of one eye may be the only one affected. After some years both eyes may become affected.
About ten years ago a girl, aged twenty, came to me with a diagnosis of Conical Cornea in the right eye, the left-eye being nearly normal. The vision of the right eye was 10/200 not improved by glasses. I told the patient that I did not think I could improve the conical cornea but I might be able to relieve her of the pain and discom-fort in her good eye. The palming after a half hour or longer relieved her discomfort temporarily and, much to oW surprise, the vision of the eye with conical cornea was improved from 10/200 to 10/50. The patient felt much better at this quick relief and improvement in the sight of the eye with conical cornea, as it was the first encouragement that she had had in a long time. Under the relaxation treatment this patient's vision continued steadily to improve until it became normal after some weeks. The conical cornea disappeared. The patient had not only normal sight for distance but she was also able to read diamond type as close as six inches or less and as
far off as two feet. I strongly advised her to practice the palming at least two hours daily and to return for observation at regular intervals. I have not seen her since.
A second case was that of a physician, aged 40 years. He had suffered with imperfect eight and discomfort in the right-eye for about fifteen years. In the beginning his vision, he said, had been improved to some extent by strong cylinders but gradually with the increase of the conical shape of the corneo no glasses were found which gave him the slightest improvement in his sight. He was fast seen, May 12, 1922. The vision of the right-eye was 10/200 and the vision of the left was 20/30.
This case was very remarkable in that he obtained in about one week flashes of normal vision in the right-eye by practicing relaxation methods, palming, swinging and the memory of mental pictures. His treatment was very interesting to me, especially his ability to do things wrong. He was a genius when it came to deceiving himself as well as others. I had considerable difficulty in restraining his enthusiasm to treat all my patients that he met. I told him that I was very anxious to have him treat people after he recovered because I believed that would be a help to him, but until he was cured
it would be just as well for him not to talk about his treatment because he did not understand it and not only misled others but it interfered with his own recovery. He stopped treatment unfortunately before he was cured, but he felt that he had improved so much with me that he could go right along in the same way and complete his cure working by himself when he had time to spare from his practice. I believe he had a relapse and was not cured because I have not heard from him since he left New York.

The third case was referred to in the "Better Eyesight" magazine for November, 1922, in the article on page two, "The Variable Swing [link]." She was a woman, aged 24, a school teacher, and was first seen October 14, 1922. She had conical corneo in both eyes. The vision of the right eye was 10/200 while that of the left eye was 10/200 plus.

With strong cylinders she obtained 20/200ths vision in the right eye and about 20/70 in the left-eye. She could read diamond type at four inches with each eye, but much better with the left-eye than she could with the right. Palming helped her, but her best vision was obtained by practicing the long swing alternating with the short swing. When she held her forefinger about one foot in front of her face and a little below the level of her eyes, by moving her head and eyes from side to side, without regarding her finger, she became able to imagine her forefinger was moving from side to side opposite to the movement of her eyes.

While maintaining the swing of her finger she was able to imagine distant objects were moving opposite to the imagined movement of her finger or in the same direction that her eyes and head moved but much shorter. By increasing the amplitude of the swing of her forefinger she also increased the swing of distant objects. When she shortened the swing of her finger, distant objects she imagined had a much shorter swing or none at all. Looking at the Snellen test card with her finger in front of her was somewhat confusing. She got along better by holding her finger some inches to one side of her face, quite a distance from the Snellen test card.

This was a new method of practicing the Optical Swing; and, because the amplitude varied I called it the Variable Swing. Like many other swings the benefit of it is not always the same. Some people get a great deal of improvement in their vision from it while others obtain none whatever. At the first visit, with the use of palming, the variable swing, the long swing, the short swing, and the imagination of the Holos this patient obtained normal vision temporarily and to me it seemed very remarkable that she should obtain such good vision in so short a time. On leaving she was told to never again wear her glasses, to practice at home the same methods which benefited her eyes while under my supervision, but nothing more was heard from her.

Other cases of Conical Corneo were treated and relieved very promptly in a short time and were kept under observation for a number of years. It was very difficult to prevent these patients from putting on their glasses from time to time without any special reason. Some told me that glasses lowered their vision for a time but that after their removal their vision slowly came back by practicing the relaxation methods. In other cases the vision did not improve at all after wearing glasses for a short time but when they came back under my supervision for treatment of their eyes the vision was again improved to the normal. The time necessary to accomplish this was variable and in some cases required treatment for a longer time than when they were first seen. Sometimes the patients would return to their former doctor who had been unable to help them, who would test them with glasses, which always produces disaster. Naturally one would not be surprised to learn that in such cases the attending physician had libeled me very strongly. When each patient returned to me they had a knowledge of physiological optics as taught in the orthodox way which was quite wonderful. No ophthalmologist of the old school has any conception of the bad mental effect on these cases of conical corneo from the glasses. Any of my patients who came to me for treat-ment of their eyes usually had a hard time in breaking away from the influence of the orthodox physician.

The truth is very wonderful. It is a truth that persons with normal vision have a good imagination of mental pictures, sometimes best with the eyes open and sometimes best with the eyes closed. When any patient with imperfect sight obtains a good imagination or a perfect imagination the vision becomes normal no matter what may be the cause of the imperfect sight. A perfect imagination of a period is a cure for nearsightedness no matter how great it may be or how long it may have been present. It is a cure for farsightedness, astigmatism, cataract, glaucoma, detachment of the retina, atrophy of the optic nerve as well as conical corneo.

Stories from the Clinic
51: Pop
By Emily C. Lierman

I PROMISED the readers of our magazine "Better Eyesight" that some day, if I could possibly do more for dear old Pop, I would again write about him. As I became better acquainted with him, I encouraged him to talk. He was always cheerful when he came and tried to follow me in everything I directed him to do. He told me a little of his personal affairs, but was very careful not to arouse pity. Even though he has lived in the Home for the Blind for some time, he feels independent. He said, the only sadness he ever had in his life, was when his wife no longer wanted him. That was when he lost his eyesight and could not support her. After she cast him out of her home, she inherited some money and property, but before she died, she lost all her earthly possessions. All he wishes for now is just enough sight to be able to work and also see the faces of his many friends.
We worked together diligently month after month hoping he would surprise me some day and actually see. I want to be very truthful and say that even today I cannot realize that he will ever see enough to get along by himself. Yet, all things are possible and I do not lose hope, even though he is 77 years of age. One day he said, "I know I am going to see again, for once in a while I see my whole hand but it looks like a baby's hand. When I go out in the street I can see the bricn rolling attached to our front steps. I can see a man's face at times, when I am shaving him but I see his face a gray color instead of pink or a flesh color." Pop has always been a barber by trade.
My main point in to keep up his interest and see that he practices faithfully. In order to earn a few pennies, he caned chairs in the work shop. He stared while he was doing this work and that was a drawback. Yet I had not the courage to stop him from earning his spending money. After a day of this kind of work he complained of seeing bright colors before his eyes, which indicated that he strained while caning his chairs. For quith a few weeks he was not employed in this way, so he practiced more faithfully than ever. Then came a wonderful change in his left eye which in the beginning looked much worse than the right eye. I believe the Sun Treatment helped him very much. This was given him, if it happened to be a sunny day, every time he came to the office. He was placed in the sun and while looking down, his upper lid was raised and the sun was focused on the sclerc, or white part of the eye with the Sun Glass.
The solid white mass which covered the pupil and iris gradually became less. The upper part of the iris and pupil have become visible in the left eye. The constant twitching of his eyes ceased. If I could be with him more, and remind him not to stare, I know the relaxation and rest that he gets from the treatment would give him his wish and also mine,—the return of his eyesight.
Week after week he kept coming, with always the same cheery greeting: "I am glad to see you Ma'am." I became acquainted well enough with him to say: "Now, you big bluffer, you know sight well you don't see me." This remark would always bring a hearty lle, Ha from him and. then we would proceed earnestly with the treatment. Dear, dear old Pop, surely God will answer my prayers for you if it is His will that you should have your sight again. It is now the third year that he is coming to us for treatment and neither of us have given up hope yet. Only a short while ago I noticed that he was becoming more feeble and that he is not so sure of his steps as he walks along with his guide, a dear boy of fourteen years. Recently he asked me a question which was indeed hard to answer. It was this: "When do you think I will see again? Do you think in six months or so?" Before I answered I watched him and thought perhaps within six months he may be called to his Heavenly Home where there were no eye troubles; so I said, "You see I don't know for sure, but wouldnt it be great if you will see again in six months." It would be hard to put into print all the wonderful things he has promised me when that time comes. His favorite expression at the office, when he suddenly discovers a sunbeam on the carpet is "Chee Bazaleen data gone." Then, in all his excitement, as his vision fades away in the next moment, he asks "Why don't I keep on seeing?" There is always the same answer, for there is only one reason, Sezzis. When he holds the Test Card five inches from his eyes after palming for a few minutes, he is able to see black spots on the card instead of letters. He shows me the outline of the large black letter C at the top of the card.
One day he said in an excited tone, "This week the Matron of our Home came into my room and while I palmed my eyes, she read something from a magazine to me. I laid down my pipe on a table before I palmed and after the woman left my room, I had forgotten all about my pipe. Later on, as I passed by the table I saw the pipe very plainly and picked it up. I called out to my friends in the next room and told them about this wonderful thing. I can chase a man's face now, not by the sense of touch always, but I can really see his face sometimes,"
He calls me his Shining Light, Bless his heart. It thills me and makes me want to do greater things and to be a better woman.
Right now I want to apologize for making an error in the first article I wrote about Pop. I understood him to say that he had once shaved ex-President Taft, but he corrected me after the article was written and said it was Prince Don Carlos and his general staff whom he shaved. This happened in the year. 187G at Newport, R. I.
Now, up to date February, 1924, the upper part of the iris and pupil of his left eye is almost clear. Dr. Bates hopes as I do, for better results in the near future.

The Mind's Eye
By Edith McNamara

DO you enjoy your mind's eteeing pictures or your mental pictures? I do. I get four times the value of a trip to, the country or any place else by remembering the mental pictures of it perfectly. I was not conscious at the time that while my physical eye was seeing everything around me my mind's eye was making a mental picture of it to be brought back later with the help of a perfect memory. After a few experiments with perfect mental pictures I came to the conclusion that I could only imagine what I remembered. It was impossible to imagine an object unless I could remember it perfectly. If I could not remember it perfectly it became only a jumbled up, hazy recollection of something.
I think its lots of fun playing ong with the memory or mental pictures. I like to dig out of my memory all the perfect mental pictures I can—one by one—for Central Fixation plays a big part in mental pictures, remembering one thing best at a time.
Having once been to Canada my favorite way of getting relaxed is to go there by mental pictures. I go along a beautiful country road, remember a lake that had impressed me, visualize it with my mind's eye and so on. Sometimes I skip a couple of towns and arrive in Canada very quickly and other times I get enough relaxation by just staying in one town for a while.
Why don't you try this? Perhaps someone will tell you a story that will remind you of an incident which happened years ago. Follow it up with the help of your memory and see how perfect a mental picture you can obtain. I am sure that you will find pleasure and relaxa tion in so doing. If you have to make an effort to form this mental picture let it alone for a while and then go back to it again and start where you left off. This will benefit you in your palming.

Lecture to the Psychology Club

DR. BATES' lecture, given before the New York Psychology Club, proved to be intensely interesting. Two outstanding topics upon which Dr. a. dwelt at great length were concentration, and the prevention and cure of imperfect sight in school children. Everyone knows of Dr. Bates' interest in helping teach-ers to help the children. He gave a history of the Snellen test card, the discovery of its benefits to everybody, and his efforts to have these placed in the class rooms.
Dr. Bates opened the talk by saying he was glad to speak before these psychologists, and would like to tell them a case of a professor of psychology, who was also a teacher of concentration. This case was printed in detail in the April issue of "Better Eyesight" and we refer our readers to it. It explains how one man not only spoiled his sight, but undermined his general health, by concentrating. The professor was proud of the fact that he concentrated and he believed he did it quite well. He did. So well, that if he had persisted, he probably would have had to resign from his position on account of his inability to see.
This discussion of concentration brought out the fact that teachers in schools like to have their children concentrate on what they (the teachers) are saying. One teacher who is using this method with great success, said that formerly if her children gazed at her in unblinking silence, without moving, she congratulated herself that she was holding their attention. She now has them palm while she describes things, and says that it "sinks in" better. She has then read the Snellen Test Card in the mornings and afternoons, as a sort of refreshing exercise. Reading the card, palming for a few minutes, with the windows open, does away with the afternoon languor of the pupils.
For the benefit of those who had never heard of the Snellen Card, Dr. Bates exhibited one, explaining its uses, and benefits. He explained that while he did not invent the card, he did discover the many benefits derived from reading it daily.
One of the important points brought out relative to the importance of the card was the following: It was placed in the classroom of children who did not fit in any of the grades. The pupils of this class were criminally inc lined, maliciously mischievous or backward in their lessons for other reasons. He explained his method to the teacher in charge, and was gratified to find her an intelligent woman, and interested in the experiment. She followed Dr. Bates' instructions, and when he returned some months later, she had an amazing report for him. The children not only improved in their lessons, but had overcome their abnormal tendencies. In fact a good-majority of them had "skipped" a class and were promoted to a higher grade.
Dr. Bates brought his discussion to a close with the report of these cases.
Mrs. Lierman was then called upon to make a few remarks. She hoaghingly apologized for the fact that Dr. Bates dwelt on children so much, and did not once mention any of the adult patients whom he benefitted. She said that she also is anxious to help the children, but she thinks that everyone is at heart a child. Her oldest "child" is 77 years old. She calls him Pop and his story is written in this month's issue. (Mrs. Lierman is very fond of Pop, and the patients are delighted every Saturday morning with the cheerful "Good-morning Pop" with which she greets him and his own sprightly answers.)
Another case of which Mrs. Lierman spoke was that of a twelve year old boy. He had perfect sight before being operated on for mastoiditis. Through the opera-tion he became totally blind with no perception of light. Mrs. Lierman started him with the Snellen card. After some practice with the moving Snellen test card held close to his face he became able to imagine that he saw it in flashes. After a half hour or longer he imagined that there was a black spot on the upper part of the card.
This spot became darker until he could recognize the letter C. Before he left the clinic he read letters from the 70 and 50 lines. His mother was so excited at this so-called "miracle" that she had ol be placed in a separate room to calm down. (Since this article was written the boy has made such wonderful progress that Mrs. Lierman will write about him in a later issue.)
One of the points that Mrs. Lierman brought out in her talk was that a great many people have asked her if Dr. Bates ever operates. She said that he did so at the clinic and in his own private practice when it is necessary.
At the end of her talk Mrs. Lierman requested those who wished additional information to ask her questions. A great many people took advantage of this offer and the lecture did not end until after 11 o'clock.

Announcement
PRICES OF SNELLEN TEST CARDS REDUCED!
We are pleased to announce that beginning with May 1st, the Snellen Test Cards will be listed as follows:—

Paper—formerly50c;—Now25c.

Mounted"75c.—"50c.

Others"1.00—"75c.

Dr. Bates' work is being introduced in schools all over the United States. The Snellen Test Card is a great factor in testing and curing children's eyesight. In order to cooperate with Dr. Bates and propagate his work further we are allowing a special discount on the test cards to teachers.
Additional information on request.

Report of the League Meetings
By Miss May Secor, Secretary
March

THE regular monthly meeting of the League for Better Eyesight was held on Tuesday evening, March eleventh, at 383 Madison Avenue.
Dr. Achorn, vice-president of the League, called attention to the necessity of adapting the Bates exercises to the needs and temperament of each patient. The personal equation must be solved in each case.
William James has suggested that when a new theory is presented to an individual, it is well for him to inquire, "Will it work?" and "If it works, is it worth while"? Dr. Achorn advised prospective followers of the Bates Method to consider the method in the light of these two questions. Will the Bates Method work? An answer to this question may readily be found in Dr. Bates' book entitled "Perfect Sight Without Glasses," and in testimonials of Dr. Bates' patients. If the method works, is it worth while? Is it worth while to be freed from slavery to eyeglasses? If doubtful of the reply to this query, consult members of the League who now enjoy perfect sight without the use of glasses.
Dr. Bates discussed the personal equation, and assured those present that he has thus far been able to help all those who have presented themselves to him for treatment. Solution of the personal equation in many cases requires careful thought and much patience; however, it is a vital matter. Dr. Bates again emphasized the great assistance which imagination renders in restoring normal vision, and referred to several cures in which the imagination had played an important role.
It was stated that the elementary schools of several cities are conducting two types of classes for pupils who have defective vision:—
A. "Sight Conservation Classes" which care for pupils whpse sight is noticeably below normal, and
B. "Classes for the Blind" which care for children having little or no sight
Dr. Bates urged that a definite program for the development of vision be included in the daily schedule for all classes of these types. Sight cannot be restored nor improved unless the eyes are used, and used intelligently, in such a way as to eliminate eyestrain. In no case is it advisable to adhere to large print; one may begin with large print, and then train the child to use smaller print, teaching him how to eliminate eyestrain,—how to use his eyes normally. Teach the child to palm, to swing, to shift, to use his imagination, and to use his memory. Follow a definite constructive program to improve the vision of all pupils whose eyesight is below normal.
Dr. Bates stated that the continued use of large print causes acute eyestrain, and that this has been demonstrated in cities which introduced the exclusive use of large print in the lower grades of the schools; acute eyestrain and headaches became prevalent in these grades. The restoration of small print was followed by a great reduction in the number and acuteness of headaches, and cases of eyestrain.
The meeting was adjourned at the close of Dr. Bates' discussion.

April

THE April meeting of the League for Better Eyesight was held on April eighth, at 383 Madison Avenue.
Dr. Cornelia Brown, president of the Orange Better Eyesight League, reported that the Orange league has increased its membership and scope of work. Evening classes for the correction of visual defects are being conducted in East Orange by Dr. Brown and Dr. Gore. Dr. Brown urged each patient who adheres to the Bates' Method to follow the method actively and faithfully. It is by this means only that the patient may receive a maximum benefit, and that the effectiveness of the method may be demonstrated. The speaker also advised the application of Dr. Bates' Seven Truths of Normal Sight in the performance of one's daily tasks.
Michael Angelo once stated that a man could not build a perfect cathedral unless he could imagine it moving. Dr. Bates correlated this principle with shifting. Dr. Bates also suggested palming and sun treatment as a means of securing perfect relaxation in the case of inward turning eyelashes.
Mr. George Weiss, a student of Erasmus Hall, and son of the corresponding secretary of the League, reported several cases in which he has assisted in eliminating eyestrain and myopia.
At the close of Mr. Weiss' report the meeting was adjourned.

TEACHER'S CONFERENCE SCHEDULED FOR MAY LEAGUE MEETING

The May meeting of the League for Better Eyesight will be held at eight o'clock on Tuesday evening, May thirteenth, at 383 Madison Avenue. This meeting is designed especially for teachers, apd will be devoted to explanations and demonstrations of Dr. Bates' method for the cure of visual defects without the use of eyeglasses. Teachers and their friends are cordially invited to be present on the thirteenth, and to learn how Dr. Bates' methods may be applied in the class room.

Fine Print
By W. H. Bates, M.D.

THE photographic reduction of the fine print can be used with great benefit to patients suffering from high degrees of nearsightedness. At first it has to be held at a certain close distance from the eyes and cannot be seen so well if placed an inch further or an inch nearer. When read easily or perfectly the white spaces between the lines appear much whiter than they really are and the card seems to be moving from side to side or in other directions, if one takes the trouble to notice it. The eyes are blinking frequently and this is also usually an unconscious act.
More perfect rest or relaxation of the eyes is obtained by reading this fine print perfectly than by doing some other things. By alternately looking at the large letters of the Snellen Test Card at five or ten feet or further and reading the fine print close to the eyes, one can obtain flashes of improved vision at the distance. By practicing, these flashes become more frequent and the letters are seen more continuously. The method is to be highly recommended because it seems to be one of the best methods of improving the distant vision.

The De Graf Fund
for
The Prevention of Myopia in School Children

MR. JERE DE GRAFF was a patient who derived benefit from the treatment of Dr. Bates, and felt that something should be done to pre-vent imperfect sight in school children. He subscribed $7.50 for this fund. The money is to be for the purchase of Snellen Test Cards to be given to school teachers for use in the class room. When Dr. Bates learned this he offered to subscribe double the amount of the total subscriptions, provided the teachers who receive the Snellen Test Card will pay ten cents each, agree to discard their glasses permanently, and render a report of the vision of the children, as well as their own, before and after treatment, at least once every six months.
Dr. Bates has also requested the Central Fixation Company to allow a special price on the Snellen Cards for teachers using them in the class-rooms. The price, therefore, to schools will be twenty-five cents for the regular, seventy-five cents, cardboard style.

Questions and Answers

Question—What is the cause and cure of granulated eyelids?
Answer—The cause is strain. The cure has been accomplished by practicing the universal swing, by palming and other methods of correcting the strain.
Question—What can I do to help my sight when my vision blurs while reading?
Answer—Palm more frequently or imagine the white spaces between the lines are whiter than the other parts of the page.
Question—What is Trachoma?
Answer—Trachoma is a contagious disease of the inside of the eyelids. Consult some competent ophthalmologist for diagnosis and treatment.
Question—Does palming help nervousness?
Answer—Yes, when it is done right. It can be done wrong.
Question—Is Glaucoma curable?
Answer—Glaucoma is curable. Some cases of blindness from Glaucoma have been permanently cured by palming for long periods of time.
Question—Does the cataract become absorbed by relaxation treatment?
Answer—In cases which have been cured the opacity of the lens disappeared and the lens regained its normal condition.

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