

STRAIGHTENING EYES.

New Theory Explained and Proven by Dr. Seymour to Many Patients.

I make the statement that nine out of every ten persons who are cross-eyed can trace this condition to a defect in their sight. It is very rare that a child is born cross-eyed. In the majority of instances the eyes become crossed between the ages of one and five years, and almost any mother will tell you that this condition dates back to a fall, a sudden fright or some sickness.

But the real cause dates farther back than this. The child was born with defective vision, and until weakened by sickness or nervous shock they were not obliged to cross them in order to see. As a small child the eyes are seldom crossed any length of time. But repeated strain is apt to leave them a little more crossed each time, until eventually the child is cross-eyed. You are apt to neglect this state of affairs, feeling certain that as they grow older the eyes will straighten themselves, or that an operation may be performed which will restore the eyes to their normal condition; but here is where you make a very grave mistake. In the first place the sight of the eye which becomes crossed is more than likely to depreciate in power and in fact, if persistently neglected, is almost sure to become entirely useless. You are not aware of this fact, for the eye does not change in appearance in the least, and you only wait for a convenient time to have it straightened by the use of the knife, never dreaming that the operation is very apt to be entirely useless if the sight has left the eye, for there is nothing then to keep the eye fixed on the same object that the other eye sees. And if the operation is successful in improving the appearance, it does not restore the sight to the long-neglected cross-eye.

How often do we hear parents say that they do not wish to take the responsibility of having their children's eyes straightened until the child is old enough to express a wish in the matter himself, for fear the operation might injure the sight. This view of the matter is wholly unbecoming to a parent who has the real welfare of the child at heart, for the child is sure to learn in later years that this neglect has been the means of his losing the sight of an eye.

The family physician has been to blame for many a sightless eye, as he

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has advised the parents to let the matter go and perhaps the eye will straighten itself in time. This does happen sometimes, but the occasions are very rare, and it usually goes from bad to worse.

Of course young people—and oftentimes middle-aged persons—are not beyond the reach of optical science, as I have had in the past, and still have many patients who have passed the age of childhood long ago, and whose eyes have been most satisfactorily straightened.

You ask why all these explanations and what is the proper course to take when a tendency to cross-eyes is first noticed in children? It is simply this: Take them at once to a thoroughly competent specialist and have their eyes examined with regard to the condition of their sight, and I promise you you have done the correct thing, for almost invariably the eyes can be very much relieved by the proper adjustment of lenses, which will relieve the strained condition of the sight. To be sure, it is only within recent years that it has been possible to fit a small child with glasses, but with the methods now employed children, even as young as three years of age, can be as accurately fitted as a grown person, although the means used are very different from the customary test given by the average oculist or optician.

I have given particular attention to this feature of my specialty and have spent years of study in becoming proficient in it I assure you; and children brought to me for treatment are always given special attention.

DR. SEYMOUR.

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