

MEDICINE

Rare Diseases are Discussed At Meeting of Specialists

**New Treatments for Ailments of the Eye, Ear, Nose
And Throat Reported at Annual Gathering in New York**

LAST week was examination time for doctors who want to specialize in treating eye, ear, nose and throat diseases.

Hundreds of physicians from all over the United States and Canada, already graduated from medical school and many of them with years of practicing behind them, were quizzed at the Vanderbilt Clinic, Medical Center, in New York City. If they passed, they will be awarded certificates by the American Boards for Ophthalmology and Otolaryngology and will be eligible for membership in the American Academy of Ophthalmology and Otolaryngology.

Science News Letter, October 3, 1936

PHYSIOLOGY

Dizziness May Be Cause Of Apparent Suicide

DEATH from falling out of a window or in front of a speeding automobile may have every appearance of suicide and yet be really due to sudden dizziness caused by such a trifling condition as an accumulation of wax in the ear canal.

Such a possibility was pointed out by Dr. Marvin F. Jones to the American Academy of Ophthalmology and Otolaryngology meeting in New York last week.

Dizziness may also be a sign of some serious ailment such as a brain tumor or of bleeding within the complex internal ear mechanism, Dr. Jones said. This indicates the need for close cooperation between ear-nose-throat specialists and neurologists.

Many serious brain ailments first show up as ear or nose disorders of more or less serious nature. Pain in the face, for example, makes people think of sinus trouble, but it may be the symptom of serious neuralgia. Loss of speech may be stage fright or it may be due to paralysis of the vocal cords or to aphasia. Disease of the ear, such as mastoid disease, on the other hand, may lead to disease of the brain.

Reversing the picture, Dr. Donald J.

Lyle of Cincinnati reported diseases of the brain that may affect the eye. Inflammation of the brain itself, called encephalitis and commonly known as sleeping sickness, shows many eye symptoms. Inflammation of the covering of the brain, meningitis, often affects the nerves which pass through this covering to the eyes and causes eye symptoms. Syphilis of the nervous system and brain often causes blindness and impairs the eye muscles.

Science News Letter, October 3, 1936

MEDICINE

Meningitis May Harm Eyes By Paralyzing Muscles

MENINGITIS may affect the eyes by partially paralyzing the eye muscles or by causing defects in vision as a result of scars left by severe inflammation at the base of the brain. Cases in which this had occurred were reported by Dr. Parker Heath of Detroit. Dr. Heath examined the eyes in two hundred persons who had suffered from meningitis in an epidemic three years previously.

Studies of monkeys showed that when these animals recovered from meningitis they did not suffer paralysis of the eye muscles, but their eye nerves at the base of the brain were covered with a thick discharge.

Science News Letter, October 3, 1936

MEDICINE

Eyes May Be Affected By Meningitis and Arthritis

POSSIBILITY of arthritis, the rheumatism of a generation ago, affecting the eyes appears in an unusual case reported by Dr. Frederick A. Kiehle of Portland, Ore.

Dr. Kiehle's patient was a sixty-year-old woman who had been bedridden for nine years with deforming arthritis. Both this patient's eyes showed a softening and thinning of the sclera. This is the tough coat of the eye-ball which helps to keep it in its rounded shape. Dr. Kiehle feels there is some relation be-

tween the eye condition and the arthritis. He cited reports of similar cases and urged physicians to investigate the possibility further.

Science News Letter, October 3, 1936

SURGERY

New Operation Saves Eyes Threatened by Glaucoma

A NEW operation which promises to save many eyes afflicted with glaucoma was described by Dr. Otto Barkan of San Francisco at the same meeting of the American Academy of Ophthalmology and Otolaryngology.

In this serious eye ailment there is increased pressure in the eyeball due chiefly to a blocking of the channels which allow for the escape of fluid from the eye back into the circulation. Dr. Barkan has perfected a method of locating the point of blockage.

With a special lens fitted over the patient's eye and a microscopic arrangement, magnifying forty times, for both his own eyes, the surgeon is able to get a direct view of the field of operation. With a very delicate knife he then frees the clogged area at the base of the iris.

The procedure is so new that it has not been used yet on many cases, but Dr. Barkan feels that it is greatly superior to other operations for this condition.

Science News Letter, October 3, 1936

MEDICINE

Rare Disease of Cornea Produces Opaque Nodules

A CASE of a rare disease of the cornea of the eye which interferes with vision was reported by Dr. Benjamin Roncs of Washington, D. C. The cornea is a structure which fits over the iris of the eye like a watch crystal, and which must be transparent or the eye has no vision. In the case Dr. Roncs reported, small opaque spots or nodules appeared on the cornea, interfering with its transparency. Sometimes instead of occurring as nodules, these spots streak across the cornea in the form of a lattice. The cause of the condition is unknown and nothing can be done to remedy it. The condition is usually not progressive and the amount of vision the patient has depends on where the nodules or lattice appear on the cornea. Dr. Roncs believes the condition often runs in families and that it is due to a general disturbance of body processes rather than to any local condition within the eye.

Science News Letter, October 3, 1936