



Underwood and Underwood
FORMER SENATOR RANSELL

portion of Senator Ransdell's speech which points out that any increased span of life now enjoyed in this country is due to the elimination of many childhood diseases, whereas men of mature years face prospects of death from disease exactly as menacing as those with which we were confronted fifty years ago.

Science News Letter, March 14, 1931

PSYCHOLOGY

Feeling Important Helps Heal Crippled Children

THE IMPORTANCE of feeling important is being emphasized by the Social Service Department of the University of Michigan Hospital at Ann Arbor in its special department for physically handicapped children which last year enrolled 1,484 students.

A feeling of inferiority and uselessness among children who are physically handicapped is believed by the hospital authorities to cause a slowing up of physical recovery and possibly later to make the child's life a burden both to himself and to society.

By discovering and developing the special abilities of child patients, the department of special education attempts to make the children forget their weakness and develop a new interest in life.

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MEDICINE

Cross-eyes Are Corrected by New Device Like Stereoscope

Method Devised by English Physician Teaches Eyes to Work Together and Can Be Made Into a Game for Children

A NEW method of correcting cross-eyes or squint, scientifically termed strabismus, has been devised by Dr. Ernest E. Maddox of Bournemouth, who just reported it to the Royal Society of Medicine, London. The new method does not claim to replace the old ways of correcting strabismus by glasses, prisms, or operation, but supplements them.

Dr. Maddox suspected that many of the more incurable cases of cross-eyes are due to persistence of the infantile inability to co-ordinate the movements of the two eyes. He has developed an apparatus designed to discourage the tendency of each eye to do business on its own account instead of in partnership.

The principle which he employs is the use of the hand of the squinter to educate his squinting eye, imitating the natural process of infancy in which the hand and eye mutually perfect their training by trial and error.

This new instrument, the cheiroscope, takes its name from two Greek words meaning "hand" and "look." It is similar to the familiar stereoscope but whereas the stereoscope is held in the hand and the eyes look straight forward at a picture placed in a carrier opposite the lenses, the cheiroscope is tipped so that the lenses are above a horizontal tray surface which replaces the picture carrier and on which the child can play or draw. The child looks down on the tray and a vertical plane divides the field of vision.

If a bead is placed on the tray beneath one eye, a ring on the other half of the tray seen by the other eye will appear surrounding the bead or may be so placed by the child. On the theory that left hand and left eye work together, as do right hand and right eye, the hand on the side of the poor eye is kept busy.

The eye belonging to the hand is tempted to the spot with which the hand is occupied and does its best to help it, even though it only wakes up to do so gradually, while at the same time the surgeon learns what the child's brain is doing by watching the hand.

It is all a game to the child. A fierce open-mouthed lion on one side can be fed by red beads on the other. The picture of a pretty little girl on one side can have a bead necklace constructed round its neck by the child, one eye all the time seeing the little girl, the other the beads.

There are modifications of this apparatus used for different degrees and types of squint. Dr. Maddox points out that there is no reason why the "hand and eye" principle should not be turned to account with an ordinary stereoscope. Here a finger on the side of the amblyopic eye must point out details of the picture, and the trick of this procedure is to prevent the finger from traveling across the mid-line to the picture in front of the good eye.

Dr. Maddox promised that with perseverance and concentration squint training will bring results.

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ASTRONOMY

Friday, March 13, Marked Triple Anniversary

FRIDAY, March 13, far from being unlucky, marked a triple anniversary for astronomers.

Exactly 150 years ago on that day, this year, the first extension to the limits of the solar system was made when William Herschel, then a musician of purely local repute at Bath, England, discovered the planet Uranus through his little six-inch reflecting telescope. That was on March 13, 1781.

On the same date in 1855 there was born in Boston Percival Lowell, who was to found the great modern observatory bearing his name.

And on March 13 last year Prof. Lowell's successors announced the discovery of the planet Pluto, the third modern discovery of a major planet. The second time was in 1846, but on September 23, when Galle, in Germany, discovered Neptune.

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