

ORIGINAL CONTRIBUTIONS.

PREVENTION OF BLINDNESS.*

By THOMAS A. WOODRUFF, M.D.,
Chairman Chicago Association for the Prevention of Blindness, Chicago.

IT has been said by some one that "preventatives of evil are far better than remedies; cheaper and easier of application and surer in result." Efforts which have been more or less successful have been put forth to prevent crime, immorality, accidents, pain, etc., but until a comparatively recent date very little has been done to guard against that most deplorable and dreaded of all infirmities, blindness, the number of whose victims has continued to increase from year to year.

Of the blind people of the world it can be safely said that over 40 per cent. are unnecessarily deprived of their sight as a result of ignorance, neglect, and carelessness. Such an assertion is borne out by facts, and this in an age whose watchword is "prevention."

Preventable blindness is due to numerous and varied causes, among them being industrial accidents, accidents at play, sequelæ of some of the infectious diseases, wood alcohol, sympathetic inflammation, syphilis, hereditary and acquired; progressive near-sightedness, eye strain of various kinds, particularly among school children, and ophthalmia neonatorum.

It is incumbent upon those who desire to ameliorate the conditions of a struggling humanity to investigate and eliminate any administrative fault, any kind of neglect, any form of abuse, which may justly be cited as the cause for a single case of unnecessary blindness. Surely any cause which results in such deprivation to a single human being merits the most careful investigation, with a view to such complete elimination that no person will be deprived of the light and find himself in a world of unnecessary darkness.

INDUSTRIAL ACCIDENTS.

Blindness resulting from industrial accidents is, unfortunately, met with in large manufacturing centres, and is many times considered an act of God, which must necessarily be accepted without complaint or criticism.

That these accidents are largely unnecessary and could easily be prevented has been so impressed upon many of the large casualty insurance companies that one of them has issued a book for general distribution, showing the most common cause of accidents and how they might most effectually be avoided. That accidents will occur no one will

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