

THE METHODS EMPLOYED IN EXAMINING THE EYES FOR THE DETECTION OF HYSTERIA.

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Although much has been written regarding the value of the ocular signs and symptoms of hysteria in the diagnosis of that disease, I believe there is good reason for returning to several matters in this connection that seem to me of vital importance, especially as I do not think sufficient stress is commonly laid upon the means by which one must arrive at diagnostic conclusions.

My own belief, after a somewhat extended acquaintance with this disease is, that, if one were to make a special study of that organ that most uniformly exhibits the evidence of hysteria, the eye would afford the most information, even more emphatically than the skin or the mucous membranes. On the other hand, anomalies of the general sensibility are probably more easily detected by the average individual (who methodically searches for them) than are ocular defects. But as the scientific observer omits no examination that will assist him in arriving at proper conclusions in diagnosis, prognosis or therapy, I enter a plea for a more thorough and more general use of certain methods employed by the ophthalmologist in detecting the presence of ocular hysteria as one manifest of the general neurosis.

First of all, then, what are the commonest ocular manifestations of hysteria, what the most reliable means for their detection, and how may errors in examination be avoided? I need hardly say that