

Correspondence.

OPHTHALMOLOGICAL WORK IN BIRMINGHAM— THE TREATMENT OF SQUINT.

Editors PRACTITIONER AND REVIEW :

To any medical man a visit to Birmingham would be interesting, for it is a great medical centre, and in the magnificent buildings and equipment of the General Hospital the city may take a justifiable pride. But any one interested in ophthalmology will be specially pleased to see the work being done by Owen, Priestley and Smith. As being of general interest I may refer to the work being done in connection with strabismus. Priestley Smith selected this as the subject of the Bowman lecture which he gave last year in London. He spoke then of what had been accomplished by Javal, of Paris, and gave his own experience, which has been large, especially among children.

Children are brought to him not only from the Midlands District, but from many parts of England. His usual practice is as follows: On the first visit the eyes are examined, the angle taken, and atropine drops ordered. The second visit (which may be the following day, but is usually the third or fourth), the vision and refraction are taken, and glasses ordered, if needed. Then the directions for educating the squinting eye are given, and the child sent home. If no operation is needed, he only needs to return at long intervals usually.

The earlier a squint can be put under treatment after its appearance the better the chance of complete cure. This fact the people are beginning to recognize, and, as a consequence, very young children are brought to this clinic for treatment. In regard to results these are, so far as children are concerned, excellent on the whole. In a considerable number of cases false fixation has been replaced by true—the eyes becoming straight. In adults the results are not so good, but even here some cases are seen showing in a remarkable manner what systematic and intelligent treatment will accomplish.

J. T. DUNCAN.

BIRMINGHAM, May 12th, 1899.