

endowed with nerves than any other organ, and because it is the most abused part of our body.

Physiologically the eye is the most important organ connecting us with the world outside. Vision dominates speech, writing, thinking and locomotion. Without vision there could be no life as we live it, no civilization. To see correctly is to avoid dangers and live; to see faultily is to perish. To continue life nature sacrifices every other function before it endangers sight.

To protect the eye and its sublime office it gave it the 2nd, 3rd, 4th, part of the 5th, the ophthalmic ganglion connecting it with the sympathetic, and the 6th pair of nerves. Through their roots these nerves are connected, indirectly, with the rest of the twelve pairs of nerves.

The purpose of the eye is to give us clear and distinct vision with no effort or the minimal amount of effort compatible with health. But does it do so? Not always. To do this it must not only act physiologically correct, which it usually does, but it must be optically perfect, which it never is.

The difference between a perfect eye and a faulty one may be only a difference in the diameter of the eye of 1-300th of an inch in one of its meridians. The most perfect eyes declared are on careful examination found to be imperfect. This imperfection, slight though it be, is sufficient to throw a blurred image on the retina, provided the ciliary muscle does not counteract this defect by compressing the lens (accommodation). The compression of the lens has to be kept up, continuously without intermission, as long as the eye is kept open and light strikes the retina.

As the overuse or abuse of as delicate an organ as the eye, endowed with so many sensitive nerves, is bound to produce baneful effects, why does not everybody suffer from eye-strain? For the simple reason that not everybody's defects are of equal seriousness, that everybody's reserve-energies and health are not alike and that the use or abuse of the eyes of different people are different.

Comparisons are always faulty, but if I am permitted I will compare our body to a household.

In eye-strain we would squander our income unnecessarily. A rich man, living on a vast income, may never notice that there is a great deal of superfluous expense in running his house; he will either consider his household economically managed, or, in case his attention be called to the waste, refuse to be bothered by such insignificant item.

The man of the middle class will do exactly as the rich man does, as long as times are good. But should his business take a reverse, we will notice him become very critical about the expense account. He may