

Progress of Medical Science.

OPHTHALMOLOGY AND OTOTOLOGY.

IN CHARGE OF J. T. DUNCAN.

Ocular Symptoms in Cerebro-Spinal Meningitis.

A. J. Ballantyne (*British Medical Journal*) has made a careful study in seventy-three cases.

Retraction of the Eyelids.—This was observed in fifteen cases, in some so marked as to expose the sclera above and below the cornea. This symptom seems to be confined to cases in which the chance for recovery is small.

Blepharospasm.—This was very frequent. The lid spasm was often severe and at first sight suggested photophobia. This is probably the symptom described as photophobia in cerebro-spinal meningitis, but the writer has not observed true photophobia in his series of cases.

Iritis, Cyclitis and Choroiditis.—No evidence of these was found in this series.

Pupils.—Abnormalities of the pupils were the most common symptoms. In sixty-three cases out of sixty-nine there was some abnormality, either inequality, changes in the size or changes in the reflex.

Strabismus.—This was found in fifteen cases.

Nystagmus was seen in seven cases.

Ophthalmoscopic Conditions.—Double optic neuritis was found in five cases, and in nine others were to be seen the premonitory appearances of optic neuritis.

Conclusion.—It will naturally be asked whether the ocular symptoms of cerebro-spinal meningitis are likely to afford any help in diagnosis or prognosis. The frequency of the presence of eye symptoms shows that it is worth while to have the eyes frequently and carefully examined. Perhaps the most striking feature of these cases is the great variation in the symptoms—squint, retraction of the lids, sizes and reactions of the pupils, vision, etc.—in the same patient from day to day, and even in the course of a single examination. This is brought out by the records of the writer's own examinations as detailed above, but even more markedly by comparison of these with the notes made from time to time in the hospital journals. In this respect cases of cerebro-spinal meningitis seem to the writer to differ somewhat from other forms of meningitis.