

SOME THOUGHTS ON EYES

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There was a time when, as a medical student, I thought I might become an eye specialist. Ophthalmologists seemed such uncomplicated people basking in the sunshine in their large cars, waiting for the cataracts to ripen, with their pockets full of atropine and acid drops.

To one who values individuality more than most, I thought it would be a pleasant thing to gaze into eyes of a diversity of colour, and to be paid for it. Not for me the dark cavern of the mouth, or the treasure house of the chest; much better the eye with its fascinating appendages.

The wise say variety is the spice of life. Think, therefore, of the variety in eyes. Cicero has called them "Sentinels of the Soul". "Take a pair of sparkling eyes" is a good song, but why limit oneself to a pair? There is many another pair under the bonnet or under the veil!

Consider the colour more carefully. Blue, brown, black, grey, green, hazel, even yellow. Blue has always been the popular colour, brown the most intelligent and hazel the most appealing. Mistress Nell Gwynne had hazel eyes. Hazel for helplessness. "Don't let poor Nelly starve"! All my eye and Betty Martin!

As well as a variable colour, eyes have a variable shape, from the full round saucer eyes of a wondering child to the cunning almond-shaped slits of the Oriental. The pupil also can vary in size. Small in the morning when the eye is rested, and large at night when stimulated by love, or light, alcohol, or belladonna.

When we are young I suppose vitality is the quality most sought after in the eye, but as we grow older we value kindness more.

A brilliant glance, the glad-eye of the music-hall and the public street is a delight of youth; but the steady eye of understanding is one of the rewards of age. Lack-lustre

eyes are a misfortune not always associated with ill-health, though as a rule the person who is full of beans has clear sclerotics. Bile beans for health! The girl with the cod-fish eye may be a back marker as regards matrimony, but she may have developed other attributes.

What one misses most in the eyes of youth today is a lack of speculation, nothing is a surprise any more.

"Thy bones are marrowless, thy blood is cold,
Thou has no speculation in those eyes
Which thou dost glare with."

Most of the modern treatment of eye conditions dates from the invention of the Ophthalmoscope by Helmholtz in the middle of last century.

Homoeopathic Remedies

The homoeopath has many remedies to choose from for the common complaints of lachrymation and photophobia, about three dozen drugs are listed for each complaint, so he must individualise carefully, separating the constitutional from the mechanical causes.

Dr. Scoular had an article in the British Homoeopathic Journal for July 1947 where he remarked that he had gone through the materia medica pura and only once come across the word squint under *Alumina* "Squinting of both eyes"—but in a true squint only one eye rolls.

Cataract as a word is also only mentioned once under *Cannabis sativa*, though Kent has five drugs in large type, *Calc. carb.*, *Calc. fluor.*, *Causticum*, *Mag. carb.*, *Silica*, *Sulphur*.

The eye condition that requires immediate surgical attention is glaucoma or a rise in the intra-ocular tension. Glaucoma can be either acute or chronic and is seen in the pop-eyed type of person with bloodshot eyes—they have the dog-like eyes of the Pekinese.

I have used *Spigelia*, *Sulphur* or *Phosphorus* for this type of patient but it is best to play safe with them and put them under the care of an eye specialist for in an acute

attack of glaucoma no time must be lost or they will lose the eye.

John Milton was blind for most of his life. He wrote of "Euphrasy and Rue to cleanse the visual ray"—and I still use *Euphrasia* tincture, five drops in water, for conjunctivitis and *Ruta* tincture for the modern eye-strain found in television addicts. [Two drops of tincture to the eye-bath of water.]

For the starry-eyed types I think almost automatically of *Belladonna* or *Calc. carb.* or *Calc. phos.*

Another eye medicine which is neglected is *Chelidonium*, whose very name bears relationship to the eyes for it comes from chelidon, the Greek word for a swallow. The Ancients thought, that if a swallow picked out the eyes of the young, the plant chelidon (or the greater celandine) could recover their sight. I once used *Chelidonium* with good effect on a man who came to me with blue sclerotics. This made me think at once of fragile bones but there was nothing of this in my patient's history so it was not a deficiency disease. It turned out that twenty years ago the man's doctor had prescribed silver nitrate drops for some trivial condition and the patient had been dropping silver nitrate into his eyes daily ever since. This shows how precise one should be in giving instructions to a patient! The patient was a very indolent fellow with a sluggish liver, so constitutionally *Chelidonium* suited him.

Another case I had recently was a lady who, for quarter of a century, looked after the gold fillings in a dental establishment. She was depressed and going blind for her exacting job was to measure out the gold each day and check up the gold fillings in the evening. I gave her *Aurum sulph.* and sent her to an eye specialist who said she had detachment of the retina. She improved so much on the *Aurum* that he had the greatest difficulty in finding where the detachment was at the operation.

Some years ago I wrote a little poem about the common ailments of the eyes, listing at the side the more usual

homœopathic drugs which I had found useful in eye work, but, as usual, the constitutional symptoms of the patient must be considered before arriving at an accurate prescription.

SOB SISTER.

Pray tell me pretty lady	
What's the matter with your eye?	<i>Pulsatilla.</i>
Have you got a Hordeolum	<i>Hepar sulph.</i>
A Hordeolum or stye?	<i>Staphisagria</i>
Or is it a Chalazion	<i>Conium</i>
Chalazion or cyst?	<i>Thuja</i>
Pray tell me pretty lady	<i>Graphites</i>
The doctor must insist. . .	
Perhaps a Blepharitis?	
Yes! Blepharitis I said,	
It simply means your lovely eyes	<i>Graphites</i>
Have rims uncommon red.	<i>Silica</i>
Perhaps Conjunctivitis?	<i>Nat. mur.</i>
Phlyctenular or Flick—	<i>Phos.</i>
Are you partial to the cinema?	
For that could do the trick.	
Do you suffer from Epiphora	
Epiphora or tears?	<i>Nat. mur.</i>
Don't worry, pretty lady,	<i>Ant. crud.</i>
It will vanish with the years.	<i>Pulsatilla</i>
There's no Dacryocystitis—	<i>Stannum</i>
Inflammation of the sac—	<i>Apis</i>
Just veto the Tear-jerkers—	<i>Ruta</i>
Send your Television back.	

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