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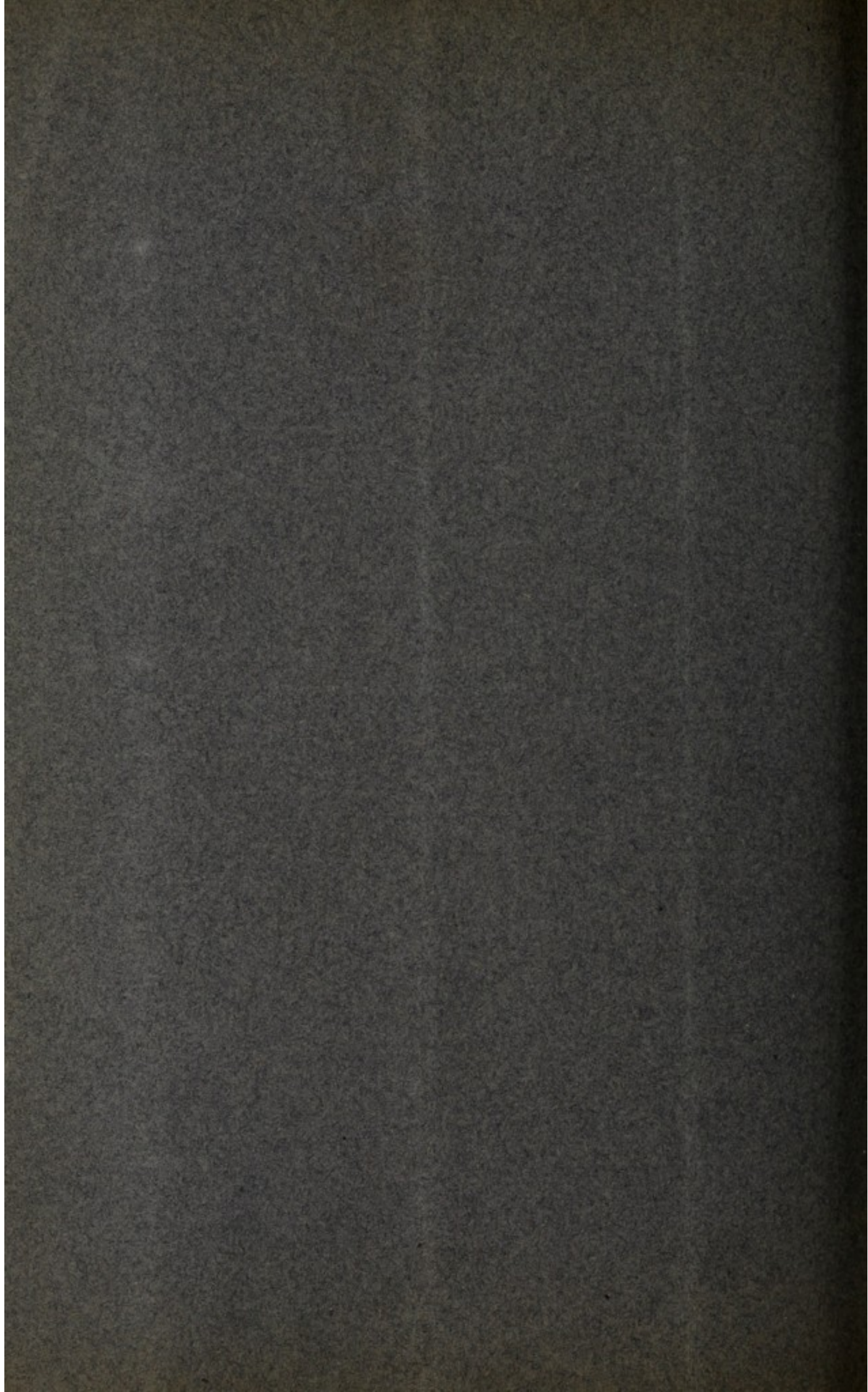


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SYSTEMIC
TREATMENT
—OF—
CATARACT

BY
EPHRAIM CUTTER, M. D.,
NEW YORK CITY.



(Reprint from the *Medical Brief*, August, 1904.)

SYSTEMIC TREATMENT OF CATARACT



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EPHRAIM CUTTER, M. D.,
NEW YORK CITY.

What is cataract? It is an idiopathic and traumatic opacity of the crystalline lenses caused by fatty degeneration of different varieties having unity, but not uniformity. The positive evidence is in the dicta of oculists, specially the German, in the morphological examination of cataracterous lenses; is the artificial production of cataracts by carbohydrates in excess hypodermically in guinea pigs and frogs and by half immersion of frogs in syrup.

The negative evidence is in the restoration, more or less complete, by the withdrawal of carbohydrate food in excess and by living upon lean animal food.

As history it may be said that in preparing an inaugural thesis on endosmosis the writer studied the histology of the crystalline lens, and later the physical appearances of fatty degeneration in other tissues, so that when the question was raised as to the kind of degeneration in cataracts there was no difficulty in recognizing at once the opacities to be due to fat in its granular amorphous forms. He photographed them and exhibited their lantern slides to medical societies as pioneer work.

Also that about 1855 Dr. S. Wier Mitchell

produced cataracts in both eyes of guinea pigs and frogs by one drachm of the saturated solution of common white sugar beneath the skin. He half immersed frogs in the same syrup and in less than an hour they died with lenses cataracterous. Later Sir B. W. Richardson repeated these experiments successfully in London. He said that there were other things as well, injected subcutaneously, that produced cataracts in frogs.

Lastly the writer repeated the frog experiments successfully, though the frogs, fresh from their natural habitat, stood the exposure longer than the Philadelphia and London batrachians. Under the microscope these artificial frog cataracts were found invaded with granules of fat and globules of oil that caused the opacities.

The doubter is respectfully requested to disprove these observations by repetition discussionless. Till they are thus upset they must stand.

SOME GENERAL CAUSES OF FATTY DEGENERATION.

1. By retarded and impeded circulations. English idea.
2. By feeding on fatty food and carbo-

hydrates in excess and long continued. They all are CHO. Conventional idea.

3. By excessive production, long continued, of CO₂ gas by fermentation in the alimentary canal paralyzing more or less parts near and remote, and thus impeding and retarding the circulations. American idea.

Particularium.—A man suicided with phosphorus in twenty minutes. His heart muscles were found infiltrated with granules and globules of fat. But poisons are not food.

From the above we infer that

CATARACT IS A DISEASE OF NUTRITION,

even in the traumatic variety, since the blow or wound must have separated the attachments of the lens or impaired them and thus retarded or impeded the circulations of nutrition.

The oculists say that a large proportion of eye diseases is due to malnutrition. Do not poor and ill-fed folk supply the large number of eye patients? Is not the indication to treat cataracts with good systemic nutrition? Surely in the abstract, poor food is good for nobody, any more than poor manure (soluble mineral food) is good for plants.

FOOD PRINCIPLES FOR CATARACTS.

1. Food should contain all the elements that enter into the structure of the crystalline lens. Refer to the text books. Are there not more than CHO? Can CHO answer the requirements?

2. The food should not interfere with normal osmosis.

3. The food should be easily digested and assimilated and not ferment in the alimentary canal.

4. It should be food that does not put albumin casts and fatty epithelia into the urine after they have been removed by a sugarless diet of good lean beef; free from obesity or fatty degeneration, or fascia, or white fibrous tissue in excess, or of the whites of eggs, with water enough to keep the urine at 1015-1020 specific gravity, so that the circulations may not be retarded nor impeded. (The writer is a second witness to this.)

5. In a word, the food should give a normal blood and urine like to the urine

of a healthy babe on a healthy mother's breast. Even adults have met this test. (Writer a second witness.)

6. Food should be sugarless and its carbohydrates not in excess of the normal demand.

7. At first carefully examine for albuminuria, renal casts and fatty epithelia. Best to test for a week and judge from the per cent specimen. If urine is normal feed sugarless on two-thirds by bulk of food from the animal kingdom to one-third by bulk of food from the vegetable kingdom. Two quarts of water daily drunk will keep the specific gravity at 1015-1020.

If urine is abnormal follow (four) till it is normal, then follow (seven).

A FEW CASES.

Comparative.—A skye terrier was fed mainly on oatmeal, with chocolate candy. Her lenses plainly became cataracterous. Fed on animal food they greatly improved.

A man of eighty-seven, with plainly and partially opaque lenses, was fed in the above principles for a year with almost complete disappearance of opacity. The yellow lenses of a lady of fifty years was restored so as to be scarcely perceptible. Vision improved, spectacles (far-sighted) given up. Eye-strain headaches relieved. Her eminent oculist informed her that the opacity of her lenses was common in people of her age.

A middle-aged lady with distinctly opaque lenses, was likewise treated with success.

In all these human cases there was more or less of albuminuria, renal casts and fatty epithelia. Not all cases were successfully treated. Only Christ cured all. Corneal ulcer, amaurosis, glaucoma, detached retina, astigmatism, double iritis have done well under this treatment. As they are not cataracts they are out of place here. We think it wise to give this disease of nutrition systemic diet treatment, and where it does not suffice it gives a better chance for operative procedures afterwards. A system soggy with fatty degeneration is a poor field for surgery.

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