

**NOTES OF MEDICAL
EXPERIENCES IN INDIA:
PRINCIPALLY WITH REFERENCE
TO DISEASES OF THE EYE**

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MEDICAL EXPERIENCES IN INDIA

PRINCIPALLY WITH REFERENCE TO

DISEASES OF THE EYE

BY

S. E. MAUNSELL, L.R.C.S.I.

SURGEON-MAJOR, MEDICAL STAFF.

LONDON

H. K. LEWIS, 136 GOWER STREET

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PREFACE.

THE following pages have been compiled from notes in the author's possession taken mostly in the Umballa Division of the Punjab, India, where he happened to be stationed during the years 1881, 1882, 1883. They refer to experiences mostly amongst Natives, Hindoos and Mahomedans, and more especially to the subject of ocular affections as found by him to exist amongst them.

The notes were originally loosely strung together without any intention of publication. They were collected solely with the object of enabling at some future time, a retrospective view to be taken of a tour of Indian service, the monotony of which previous experience had left behind a recollection only too vivid, as well as of professional work done under unusual and peculiar conditions.

There is probably nothing new presented to the reader, and with the exception of the circumstances under which the notes were taken, there is possibly not much to interest any person unacquainted with the author, or who does not possess some knowledge of the district referred to; or again, who may not find himself with the prospect in view of an early visit to India.

Younger Officers of the Medical Service of the Army, who happen to be in the latter position, and who may

chance to read these pages, may possibly meet with something to interest them, more especially should they feel inclined to step beyond the boundary of the mere routine of official duties.

To any thus disposed, they are offered with the diffidence of one who is very sensible of the imperfections of his own professional acquirements, and with a hope that they may convey some idea of the surprisingly large field existing in India for the exercise of the branch of surgical science more especially alluded to, or of almost any other which the reader may make particularly his own.

CoRDON.

August, 1885.

MEDICAL EXPERIENCES IN INDIA.

While serving at the Cape in 1871, I had to deal with several cases of diseases of the eye amongst soldiers, and often then had occasion to regret that my acquaintance with the use of the ophthalmoscope was very limited.

I can well remember the case of a soldier of the Royal Artillery, who was invalided on account of a supposed tumour in the brain, and who interested me exceedingly; his pale face, fixed, and widely dilated pupils, and total loss of sight, are still quite fresh in my memory, but with the slight knowledge I then possessed of the *metrology* of the eye, I could not explain to myself the meaning of the changes, which a regulation ophthalmoscope revealed to me.

I was induced by such cases to study the matter specially when I returned home, and had the advantage of getting practical lessons from a late eminent specialist in Dublin.

Officers in the Medical Staff are, unfortunately, not often in a position where they can avail themselves of the teaching of the heads of their profession, or where they can attend the clinics at the Metropolitan Hospitals, but I had the good fortune to be able to take advantage of this whilst stationed at Aldershot in 1877-1878 and later; I then availed myself of the kindness of Mr. Nettleship, the head of the Oph-

thalmic Department at St. Thomas's Hospital in London, and paid frequent visits to his wards, ophthalmoscopic room, and operating theatre; my brother officers at Aldershot kindly permitted me to see their cases, and gave me the benefit of their opinion regarding my own, and through the kindness of the officer in charge of the Cambridge Hospital, I had an opportunity of taking several cases to London, where my opinion was rectified or confirmed.

For want of suitable accommodation at Aldershot for studying the ophthalmoscope, in the then temporary hut hospital in the South Camp, I converted a hospital hut close to my own into a room for that purpose, when blankets were fastened up against the small windows, and the doors closed, the low dark hut made a capital ophthalmoscopic room, in which I was able to examine my cases for refraction and other purposes; and I was surprised to find very great differences amongst men passed into the service as emmetropic, but who were both hypermetropic and myopic, the latter to a very large extent, in some cases having large myopic crescents at their discs.

How they had succeeded to evade the test-dot examination, was not quite clear, in some I found large patches of choroidal disease of long standing in quite young soldiers, causing great impairment of vision when the subject looked in a certain direction, which ordinarily he would not have been called upon to do when undergoing the examination as a recruit, and which would thus easily escape observation.

However, experience thus gained, determined me in or-