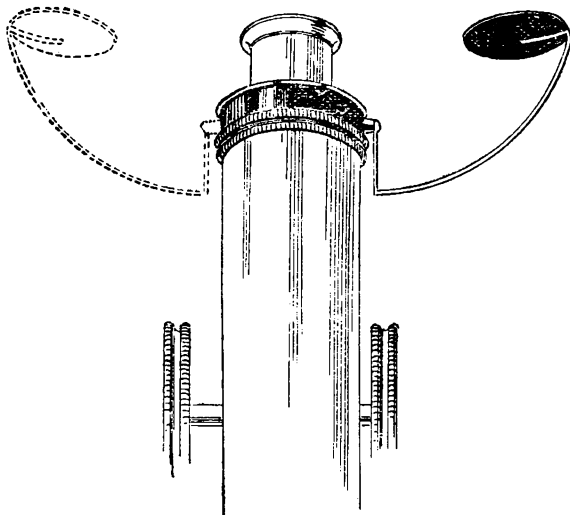


the difference in the objects, a strong mental effort is required to disregard the impression in one eye, and fix the attention upon the other only. Again, when we close one eye by the contraction of the orbicular muscle, or by pressure, as with the hand, we cause contraction of the accommodating muscle, also, and that of the open, occupied eye, as well. I have proof of this many times each day while examining eyes by the ophthalmoscope; but we are all familiar with the spasm in *both* eyes when a particle of dust is beneath the lid of one only; and, again, we are conscious of an effort amounting almost to an impossibility, before training, of keeping one eye open and the other shut.

Both these conditions are present and are factors in the fatigue which accompanies the use of a monocular instrument, and are strong reasons for employing a binocular one, when possible. Of course, each form has its own especial use and place, but this is not our present purpose to discuss. It is to overcome these sources of fatigue in the use of the monocular instrument that an eye-protector is used.

When anything is placed far within the focus of an eye no image of it is formed upon the retina, and it becomes invisible. If, then, it should be opaque and large enough to cover the whole field of vision, it is not only invisible, but shuts off the sight of all other objects as well, leaving the mind free to attend to the image on the retina of its fellow. On this principle quite a number of devices have been proposed and used, among which a plain card, perforated and slipped upon the tube, has been, perhaps, the most frequent. This has to be placed low down in order to be out of the way of the face, and thus requires to be so large to cover the field of vision that it hides the stage and interferes with the adjusting screws.



Another consists of a small plate extending horizontally from the cap of the ocular. In this the edge must be cut away to admit the bridge of the nose. This gives it a curved form, and prevents its being used before each eye alternately, except by removal and inversion. It must also be removed with each change of ocular. These removals and replacings demand so much time that most workers think it hardly worth the trouble.

The form that I have found satisfactory, after use for several years, consists of a small disc of blackened brass, about the size and shape of a spectacles glass, and supported near the eye by a wire extending from its outer margin obliquely downward to a point on the tube low enough to be out of the way of the nose, then bent upwards, parallel to the tube, but not touching it, and attached to a cut-ring which clasps the top of the draw tube

beneath the ocular. The accompanying drawing shows it in place, and will need no further explanation.

The advantages of this form are: First—The small size of the disc and support interfere the least possible with the adjusting screws and view of the stage. Second—It is easily adjusted to the eye-distance of any worker. Third—It is not in the way of the nose. Fourth—It can be easily swung around before either eye, without removal. Fifth—It is not disturbed in changing oculars. Sixth—Any mechanic can make one at a small expense. The one I am using was made by Zentmayer, of this city.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

* * * Correspondents are requested to be as brief as possible. The writer's name is in all cases required as a proof of good faith.

On request in advance, one hundred copies of the number containing his communication will be furnished free to any correspondent.

The editor will be glad to publish any queries consonant with the character of the journal.

BIRDS THAT SING BY MOONLIGHT.

THE reading of the very interesting article in *Science* for Dec. 2, entitled "Birds That Sing in the Night," by Morris Gibbs, brought vividly to my mind the pleasure I have felt in listening to nocturnal bird music.

The birds which I have most frequently heard sing at night here in southeast Kentucky are of different species from those mentioned by Mr. Gibbs, prominent among them being the Oven-Bird (*Seiurus aurocapillus*), which, although I have never seen any mention of the fact in print, sings regularly on moonlight nights.

On such occasions the song is usually the extatic, quivering jumble of warble and twitter so often heard from this bird at dusk, when he flies in zig-zag lines and short curves up above the tops of his native woods, and as quickly descends, all the time bubbling over with melody.

Almost every bright moonlight night in spring and early summer this song may be heard at intervals, breaking with silvery sweetness into midnight's tranquility.

Another bird, often heard on moonlight nights, though by some it is not considered worthy the name of a song, is that of the Yellow Breasted Chat (*Icteria virens*).

The Cuckoos are also often heard by moonlight during their southward migrations after all the resident individuals have departed.

I have frequently noticed that a bright fire in or near the woods at night called forth sleepy chirps and snatches of song from various species of birds. JOHN B. LEWIS.

THE CAMBOJAN KHMERS.

HAVING some time ago carefully studied the question of the origin of the Khmers of Cambodia, and the result of my enquiries having been published in the *Revue d'Anthropologie* (3rd Ser. Vol. I, 1886, 2d fasc.), under the title of *Les Cambodgiens et leur origine*, I may perhaps be allowed to make some remarks on Prof. A. H. Keane's letter which appeared in *Science* for August 4. That the Khmers belong to the white race, whether this be called Caucasian or not, cannot well be denied, and Mr. Keane is doubtless entitled to the credit of having first pointed out the fact. But that the Khmers are, as he states, true aborigines in the country where they are now found is very questionable, and indeed the best French authorities agree with Dr. Maurel in deriving them from India. The date of their arrival in Cambodia is given by M. Moura, and is fixed by the annals of the ancient Cambodian empire as having taken place about 543 B. C. According to the view elaborated in the paper above referred to, the ancestors of the Khmers were allied to the Tandavas of the Hindu epic, the Mahabharata, and I have endeavored