1947-07

Book Notices
The Eye-Bank for Sight Restoration, Inc.

Extensive ophthalmic research which some day may enable many of the blind to see again, and will contribute greatly toward the prevention of blindness, is now under way in the laboratory of The Eye-Bank for Sight Restoration, Inc., at its national headquarters, 210 East 64th Street, it was disclosed here recently by Mrs. Aida de Acosta Breckinridge, Executive Director.

Although one of the principal objectives of the research carried on at the present time is the discovery of a method for the preservation of corneal tissue over a longer period of time than 72 hours, a variety of other problems in the field of ophthalmology are also being studied, according to Dr. Herbert M. Katzin, who is in charge of the laboratory.

During the past year, the Eye-Bank has granted seven fellowships for research and sixteen scholarships for its training course in the operation for the transplanting of healthy corneal tissue to blind persons who lost their sight because of corneal defects. Dr. Katzin has been developing special teaching methods to give surgeons the knowledge and skill required for this delicate operation.

Typical of the research projects carried on in the Eye-Bank's laboratory are studies to improve the surgical technique of corneal grafting and to perfect photographic methods for recording purposes; development of newly discovered properties of beta radiation in treatment of corneal scars; study of the use of physiological fibrin as a substitute for sutures, and development of methods for transplantation of the vitreous.

The technique of the corneal-graft operation which is taught and constantly perfected at the Eye-Bank has attracted such world-wide attention that it is beginning to serve as an institute for foreign ophthalmologists who wish to specialize in this field. Physicians from other countries who have come here and have had scholarships or fellowships from the Eye-Bank include:

- Dr. John D. Blum, Geneva, Switzerland; Dr. Walter Kornbleuth, of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem; Dr. Geniniano de Ocampo, Manila, instructor in Eye, Ear, Nose and Throat at the Philippine General Hospital; Dr. M. K. Vue, Fukien, China; Dr. P. K. Kuo, Shanghai, China; Major M. M. A. Dubash, Bombay, India.

The operation substituting a healthy cornea for a damaged one can restore sight in only one type of blindness—that caused solely by opacity of the cornea when the rest of the eye and optic nerve are normal. It is estimated that 15,000 of the 250,000 blind persons in the United States can benefit from the corneal-graft operation.

More than a hundred leading hospitals throughout the country and many of the nation's outstanding eye surgeons are affiliated with the Eye-Bank. It is being greatly assisted by the co-operation of the Red Cross Motor Corps and important airlines in transporting eyes to the Eye-Bank and to hospitals.