

Interesting Features of Medicine

By George Thomas Palmer, M. D.

V.—What a Glance Tells a Doctor.

THE lady has always labored under the impression that therapeutics, the application of agencies to cure disease, is the greatest study of the physician. To be sure, it is in this branch of the art that the medical man is of the most practical use to the public, and yet the cure of disease he regards as one of the least attractive and one of the least scientific of the many branches.

To the well trained medical man the fathoming of the processes of Nature



Sir James Young Simpson. (One of the first users of chloroform as an anesthetic.)

and the detection of the cause and the nature of disease are the interesting and important considerations. The means of cure are matters of record and matters of precept, while in each case the diagnosis is a fresh problem capable of solution only by the application of knowledge, keen observation and correct reasoning. The textbook may tell him what to do for any given disease, but he must determine the existence of that disease by the exercise of his own powers.

There may be "born" diagnosticians to whom the secrets of Nature are disclosed through some peculiar inherent quality, but usually the power of diagnosis comes to him who cultivates the faculties common to all intelligent men.

The physician with a glance at your tongue tells you that your digestive tract is disordered, not because he sees it through your open mouth and throat nor yet because he can detect the "barnacles upon your liver" through the thickness of your waistcoat. He has learned his lesson from precept and experience.

It is not always the most rapid diagnostician who is best, but "snap" diagnosis is an attractive thing to the patient, and he likes to tell of the powers of the physician who reaches a diagnosis in five seconds without asking a question. Such a diagnosis is often proved false by more deliberate examination, and yet a glance may tell the well trained doctor as much as he could learn in an hour by word of mouth.

The puffiness which we often notice below the eye immediately suggests disease of the heart or kidneys, and the man who comes up a short flight of stairs puffing and blowing and at the same time has this puffiness under the eyes is put down as a heart disease case on the first glance of the doctor; also the man who has the puffy eye and whose skin gives off the characteristic odor usually detected by the physician is at once put down as a sufferer from faulty kidneys.

In districts in which malaria is common a glance at the yellow skin of the emaciated face of the patient estab-



Dr. William A. Hammond. (Who won fame as surgeon general of the United States Army.)

lishes in a moment a diagnosis of malaria, while the yellow skin and yellow tinge of the "white of the eye" are immediately set down as jaundice, and the seat of disease is determined to be the liver.

The figure of a man, with a thin, lined face and a sunken chest and with a bright, quick eye, may be placed under a suspicion of consumption, though such a diagnosis, of course, is not certain.

The child who has a heavy upper

whose face is puffy, whose eyes are watery and whose nose is running can be adjudged, even in the absence of eruption, as a victim of measles, especially where the disease is prevalent and the season favorable, while the marked sore throat and general redness of the skin will cause a diagnosis of scarlet fever at first sight.

The patient who lies on one side, breathing laboriously, with a bright red spot on either cheek, is under suspicion of pneumonia, a diagnosis verified if the doctor has seen the blood stained sputum in the vessel at the bedside.

The patient who while very ill must be bolstered up by many pillows that he may breathe with freedom is suffering from some heart trouble.

So we see that the doctor has many well marked signs which make diagnosis at a glance in many cases a very easy matter and a knowledge of which deprives the art of much that otherwise would seem almost superhuman.

Aside from the diagnosis of actual disease, there is much that a single look can teach the doctor of the social status, manner of life and habits of him who solicits professional aid, and these things all go to aid in proper diagnosis and proper treatment.

The soft, white hands of the fat and well groomed man, together with his high color on slight exertion, tell of a sedentary life, with liberal diet, so often productive of poor elimination and consequent rheumatism, gout and kidney troubles, while the unsteady hand, flushed face and shabby or careless attire of the alcoholic bespeak a liability to nervous disorder, to kidney disease and pneumonia.

The facial grimaces and quick, restless movements of a child tell of a highly organized nervous constitution which may give way under strain to St. Vitus' dance, epilepsy or a kindred nervous disease. The stained fingers betray the constant cigarette smoker and the tobacco laden breath him who smokes too much. The tanned face, the calloused hand and wrinkles are indicative of hard labor and battles with the elements.

It is these things, coupled with the story of the patient or of his friends,



Sir Frederick Treves. (Who performed the operation on King Edward.)

which go to make the diagnosis. A few striking symptoms simultaneously discovered by the quick sight of the doctor will at once justify the diagnosis.

It is the power of the physician to observe minute detail, to put two and two together and to learn a lesson from each symptom which makes the diagnostician. There is no special gift, which makes one capable of the determination of the character of disease.

Diagnosis is the natural faculty of him who has a comprehensive glance and a logical mind, together with ample knowledge of medical facts. It is the one respect in which the physician may exhibit the skill which makes him greater than his fellows, and it is but natural that it is the standard by which a man's place in the profession is measured.

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The Army Baby's Peril.
The following story is told of an incident that occurred when the full blown rank of the army doctor was still a novelty. The wife of Captain de Smythe, whose baby was in the throes of teething, wrote to the garrison doctor as follows:

Dear Dr. Philgrave—I should be glad if you could come round and see my baby this afternoon, as the poor darling is having a good deal of trouble with his teeth. Yours very truly,

ANGELINA DE SMYTHE.

P. S.—Please bring your lancet.

She received in reply the following letter:

Colonel Philgrave presents his compliments to Mrs. de Smythe and begs to inform her that he cannot regard any communication addressed to Dr. Philgrave as intended for himself.

Whereupon the lady, meekly accepting the rebuke of her breach of etiquette, sat down and wrote her letter, word for word, over again, but beginning "Dear Colonel Philgrave." When however she arrived at the concluding sentence she fell a certain amount of delicacy about mentioning anything so essentially unbecomingly as a lancet and so when the patient colonel received the revised letter he found that the P. S. was, "Please bring your lancet." The garrison doctor's reply was:

OUR HIGHWAYS.

Good Roads Indicate Progress—Wide and Narrow Tires.

The subject of good roads is an all American subject, but it is one which should be of most interest to those sections which have given it the least attention. Naturally the best built and the best maintained roads are in districts where there are many people and much money. But good roads do not come always because the region they traverse is populous. A region sometimes becomes populous because there are good roads. Then, again, there are bad roads in thickly settled districts—in districts where the roads ought to be good. Good roads in a neighborhood indicate progress. They result from progress and they promote progress. They are both cause and effect. Well kept highways constitute a theme which has engaged the attention of many more persons in the last decade than in any previous one.

Improved highways have promoted the extension of rural free delivery, and this delivery has aided in the de-

velopment of better roads, says the Washington Star. The buggy was a benefit to highways. A road good enough for mounted horsemen and horsewomen, as so many of our predecessors traveled, was not good enough for a buggy. Then the bicycle improved the roadways. A highway good enough for a buggy was not good enough for a bicycle, and thousands of wheelmen rolling through the country did campaign work for the betterment of roads. They told the country folk, and insisted on it, too, that their roads were not as good as some others. This was missionary work, because it is a phenomenon of country life that a man always thinks the road he lives on is very good or at least not so bad as some others.

As the bicycle helped along the good cause, so will the automobile or the traction carriage. Automobilists want



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Every farmer should help a little by using broad tired wheels. These wheels not only do not rut the roads, but help to maintain them. A broad tired wheel ought to bear more weight without strain than one with a narrow tire. There is no more friction in the use of a broad tire on a smooth road than in the use of a narrow tire on a rough one. A committee of automobilists, reporting recently on New York roads, said:

"It is worse than useless to create expensive and valuable highways only to have them cut to pieces by the use of narrow tires, as now used for the hauling of heavy loads in this state. When you have got a good thing, it costs money, and you must take care of it and change your methods to maintain it. Wide tires are of the greatest value in preserving ordinary dirt roads."

HIGHWAY ACROSS COUNTRY

The Macadamized Road From New York to Chicago.

The movement for the building of a macadamized highway from New York to Chicago is certainly deserving of success, says the Cleveland Leader. Anything that is designed to improve the country roads of any part of the United States ought to be encouraged, for the greatest obstacle in the way of the successful development of the agricultural regions of the country today is the difficulty experienced in traveling over the highways in certain seasons of the year.

The movement for good roads was given considerable impetus several years ago, when a great army of wheel riders began to clamor for improvements in the highways, and much was accomplished in various sections of the country through the efforts of the wheelmen's organization. The craze for bicycle riding has abated, however, and one force in the good roads movement has been lost.

The men back of the New York-Chicago highway project are, of course, interested in automobiles, either manufacturers or users of horseless vehicles, and they cannot be said to be free from an interested motive. This should make no difference, however. The contemplated improvement would be of great benefit to the country, and if ways and means can be provided the project should be carried through.

This country ought some day to have as good country roads as are to be found in France, Germany and other European countries in which the building of highways has been carried on scientifically for many years.

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Administrator's Notice.

The undersigned having qualified as Administrator of the estate of Henry Green, deceased, all persons having claims against said estate are hereby notified to exhibit the same to the administrator on or before the 14th day of November 1903, or the notice will be placed in bar of recovery. Parties indebted to said estate are expected to make prompt payment.

Kinston, N. C., November 13th, 1903.

W. A. MITCHELL,
Administrator of Henry Green, dec'd

Notice.

North Carolina Superior Court.

Lucy Reeves vs. Harry Reeves.

Harry Reeves, the defendant in the above entitled action is hereby required to make his appearance in the Superior Court to be held in Kinston, Lenoir County, North Carolina, on the 22nd Monday in March 1904, and answer or demur to the complaint of Lucy Reeves for an absolute divorce, grounds being adultery for which the complaint will be filed in said Court on a day of the term.

FLATO Collins,
Clerk Superior Court.

Administrator's Notice.

The undersigned having qualified as Administrator of the estate of Duck Smith, deceased, all persons having claims against said estate are hereby notified to exhibit the same to the administrator on or before the 14th day of December, 1903, or the notice will be placed in bar of recovery. Parties indebted to said estate are expected to make prompt payment.

Kinston, N. C., December, 9th 1903.

J. HARVEY,
Administrator of Duck Smith, dec'd

Sale of Town Lot for Partition.

By virtue of an order made by the Superior Court of Lenoir County, on the 27th day of December, 1902, in a special proceeding for the sale of lots of land partitioned between Eva Way Litchworth and J. E. Litchworth, now filed in the Superior Court of Lenoir County, the undersigned will offer for sale to the highest bidder for cash, at the Court House door, in Kinston, N. C., on Monday, the 22nd day of January 1904, the following described parcel of land, to-wit: One lot on the north side of Canal street, 200 feet from corner of Third Avenue, and bounded as follows: On the west by the Southern Railway, on the east by the Southern Railway, on the south by Canal street, and on the north by Canal street to a line to the Southern Railway.

At the 10th day of December, 1903.

J. L. LIPP,
Clerk Superior Court.

Rhodes Military Institute.

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