

Editorial Notes.

Laboratory Tests.

If one is to judge by the conduct of the potential and newly qualified medical of today, reference to the laboratory for the final opinion on the nature of a patient's malady will be more frequent in the future than it has been even in the immediate past. Many, and be it noted laboratory workers as well as clinicians, deplore this tendency and see in it the doom of sound medicine.

The attitude of mind which considers that laboratory tests are more valuable and far reaching in their significance than bed-side observations, and may therefore replace them, arises from a wrong perspective. To consider the laboratory findings apart, and as it were a final court of appeal, reveals a lack of appreciation of the varying type of investigation which comes under this category, of the different underlying causes of the various reactions studied, of the innumerable conditions which influence their development and hence, of the significance to be attached to them. In reality, bed-side observations and laboratory tests do not differ in their importance and reliability but in the particular phenomena of the diseased process which they reveal. All phenomena of disease are not only worthy of consideration, must indeed be scrutinised if a complete picture and perfect understanding of the pathological process are to be obtained.

The clinician will be the last to belittle the part which the laboratory has played in the elucidation of pathological processes and their recognition. Every honest bed-side observer must always be grateful for the help he has obtained from his laboratory colleague not only in the diagnosis of disease but also in the interpretation and demonstration of the significance of symptoms. This dual function of the laboratory worker should never be forgotten. The latter is specially important because it makes for a more expert clinician and renders his own and often laborious share in the diagnostic problem unnecessary, as when he has taught the clinician the meaning of certain symptoms and thus how to recognise some pathological process with his own unaided eyes and ears. A good example of this is to be found in the recent work concerning the acid-base balance of the body. These investigations have revealed that the CO_2 content of the blood is not only our best indication of the direction in which the reaction of the tissue-juices is tending, but that this also determines the rate and depth of the breathing which can therefore be utilised as an equally good guide. In this way the laboratory has endowed the character of the respiration with a new importance and, as we have already remarked, made it possible for its own more elaborate biochemical investigations to be discarded.

In many instances, however, the laboratory procedure cannot be dispensed with because as yet we have not been taught how to obtain the necessary information in any other way. The Wassermann reaction and Widal's reaction immediately

occur to one's mind in this connection. Nevertheless, even in such circumstances the laboratory must not be our only appeal, for, if the results of the tests are not correlated with the clinical findings, their true import will not be correctly understood. It is, of course, conceded that the results of these special tests may on occasion be our only definite evidence, even at times our only evidence, that the ravages of the *Spirochæta pallida* or of the *Bacillus typhosus* are responsible for the patient's illness. But it is also true that positive results are not always obtained in patients suffering from these diseases; the stage of the process, for instance, influences the biochemical changes on which the results depend. And further, it must always be remembered that the diseases which these laboratory findings would seem to indicate may not be the cause of the patient's symptoms. The serological phenomena may have some other explanation. Thus, for example, the patient whose blood contains the specific agglutinin for the *Bacillus typhosus* may have passed through an attack of enteric fever many years previously or the presence of these substances may be in response to prophylactic anti-typhoid inoculation. Nor must it ever be forgotten during the evaluation of a positive Wassermann reaction that a syphilitic is not necessarily immune to other diseases.

It must also be appreciated that different laboratory tests have varying degrees of significance because of the different underlying factors on which they depend. In some the test is carried out to detect the presence of an abnormal constituent either causing or caused by the diseased process. It may be the ætiological organism which is sought or it may be an abnormal product, *e.g.*, an agglutinin, consequent on the action of the causative agent on the tissues. The former alone can be looked upon as specific evidence, for even in the normal individual the blood serum possesses a certain power of agglutinating, for instance the *Bacillus typhosus*, or it may simulate the effect of the toxi-lipoid complex which is supposed to be the factor in syphilitic serum causing Wassermann's reaction. Thus in both these latter instances it is not so much the mere presence of the phenomenon as the strength of the phenomenon which is the matter of importance.

And finally, there are laboratory tests which are of quite a different nature to any of those already mentioned. In these particular investigations search is not made for some abnormal or foreign substance but the ability of an organ, *e.g.*, the kidney or liver, to perform its normal function is tested. Hence these tests are known as function or efficiency tests. The organ under suspicion is given its ordinary work to do and note is made of how it stands up to the task just as we test in the ward the reaction of the heart to exercise. Now, as Nature has always provided for an amount of tissue in excess of the body's normal requirements, a considerable portion of these different organs may be diseased and ineffective without impairment of their function being evident. In fact, in the case of the kidney, it has been shown experimentally that two thirds of the entire renal tissue can be removed before any loss of renal function becomes apparent. Thus a so-called negative result in the case of these special tests does not exclude disease, and perhaps extensive disease. And, what is equally important to bear in mind, a positive result does not necessarily spell disease of that particular organ, or even any bodily disease at all. Any condition which reacts on the organ by interfering with the opportunity for it to demonstrate its power will necessarily cause a result suggesting disease. This type of test in so far as it is related to renal disease

is considered in the present issue (p. 361) by Dr. Maizels. In this article Dr. Maizels discusses the shortcomings of such tests along with the difficulties of their interpretation and he draws particular attention to the absolute necessity of correlating them with the clinical findings if grave mistakes are to be avoided.

Diet and Dietetics.

We have been asked to announce that the Fellowship of Medicine has arranged a course of evening lectures on the above subject. The lectures will be given at the rooms of the Medical Society of London on Wednesdays at 8.30 p.m. from October 24th to December 12th inclusive.

The following aspects of the question will be treated: The general principles of dietetics, the diet in nephritis and diabetes, diet in the obese and the thin, diet during convalescence, in gastric disease, in infancy and finally, diet as a cause of deficiency disease.

We are sure that many of our readers will be pleased to learn that such a course is contemplated, for at the present moment diet and nutrition are arousing considerable interest and are being subjected to much research. There is, however, probably no subject about which so much nonsense is being spoken and written. If, therefore, the course can bring about a sounder outlook by revealing the important and fundamental principles underlying the question and by dispelling the many fallacies and faddisms which pervade it, and there seems every prospect of this from the list of medical men who have promised to take part in the course, the Fellowship will be conferring a boon on scientific medicine.

Week-end Course on Heart and Lungs.

We would also draw attention to another week-end course arranged for Saturday and Sunday, October 13th and 14th, at the Royal Chest Hospital. This course, we feel sure, will appeal to many post-graduate students not only because it provides for continuous instruction throughout two whole days but also on account of its comprehensiveness, embracing, as it does, diseases of the lungs and of the heart and mediastinum.

Post-Graduate Lectures in the Provinces.

It is interesting to note that the Fellowship of Medicine has arranged for the Southampton division of B.M.A. a course of lectures on 17th, 20th, 24th and 27th October, embracing ophthalmology by Mr. Lindsay Rea, diseases of the ear, nose and throat by Mr. Myles Formby, and cardiac and neurological conditions by Drs. Kenneth E. Harris and Macdonald Critchley respectively.

General Post-Graduate News.

It should be noted that Courses arranged by the Fellowship of Medicine are open only to Members and Associates unless otherwise stated. A copy of each detailed syllabus is sent to every Member and Associate.

To ensure admission or to avoid cancellation of the Courses application must be made by the date given on each syllabus.

ADVANCED COURSES.

- Cardiology:** October 8 to 20. National Hospital for Diseases of the Heart. All day. Fee £7. 7s. (Maximum of 20).
- Ophthalmology:** October 15 to November 3. Royal Westminster Ophthalmic Hospital. Afternoons. Fee £3 3s.
- Gynæcology:** October 22 to November 3. Chelsea Hospital for Women. Mornings and/or Afternoons. Fee £5. 5s.
- Diseases of the Chest:** November 5 to 10. Victoria Park Hospital. All day. Fee £3. 3s.
- Urology:** November 5 to 17. St. Peter's Hospital. All day. Fee £5. 5s. (Advanced.) (Maximum of 10).

OTHER COURSES.

- Diseases of Children:** October 1 to 13. Queen's Hospital. All day. Fee £3. 3s.
- Dermatology:** October 1 to 27. St. John's Hospital. Afternoons. Fee £1. 1s. (Practical Pathology arranged; fee £4. 4s.).
- Physical Medicine (Evening Course):** October 1 to 27. Three evenings a week. Fee £2. 2s.
- Medicine, Surgery and the Specialities:** October 8 to 21. Metropolitan Hospital. All day. Fee £5. 5s.
- Clinical Surgery (Week-end Course):** October 20 and 21. Royal Albert Dock Hospital. Saturday and Sunday. All day. Fee £2. 2s.
- Diseases of the Chest (Week-end Course):** October 27 and 28. Brompton Hospital. Saturday and Sunday. All day. Fee £1. 11s. 6d.
- Neurology:** October 29 to November 3. West End Hospital for Nervous Diseases. All day. Fee £2. 2s.
- Obstetrics (Week-end Course):** November 3 and 4. City of London Maternity Hospital. Saturday and Sunday. All day. Fee £2. 2s.
- Medicine, Surgery and Gynæcology:** November 5 to 24. Royal Waterloo Hospital. All day. Fee £3. 3s.

ADDITIONAL COURSES.

- Diseases of the Heart and Lungs (Week-end Course):** October 13 and 14. Royal Chest Hospital. Saturday and Sunday. All day. Fee £1. 1s.

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS.

- Saturday Afternoon Demonstrations:** A lecture-demonstration (illustrated by cases) will be given on the *Second* Saturday in October (the 13th) at 3.0 p.m., at the National Temperance Hospital (O.P. Dept.), Hampstead Road, N.W.1, by Dr. A. E. Clark-Kennedy on Medical Cases. On the *Second* Saturday in November (the 10th), the subject will be Surgical Cases, by Mr. C. E. Shattock. Open to Members and Associates of the Fellowship of Medicine. Fee 5/- per demonstration, payable in advance or at the lecture-room.

Tuesday Afternoon Demonstrations—General Medicine : Lecture-demonstrations will be given every Tuesday afternoon at 2.30 p.m., at the Medical Society of London, 11, Chandos Street, Cavendish Square, by Dr. A. E. Clark-Kennedy. The subjects during October will be as follows:—

October 2: Tremor.
 „ 9: Ataxia.
 „ 16: Giddiness.
 „ 23: Convulsions.
 „ 30: Headache.

The full November list will be published in the November Journal; the subject for November 6th is Failing Vision.

Open only to Members and Associates. Fee 5/- per demonstration, payable in advance, or at the lecture-room.

STANDING ARRANGEMENTS.

Anæsthetics : Practical tuition for a fortnight or a month can be arranged. Limited to two Post-Graduates at a time.

Venereal Disease: (*For Women Post-Graduates only.*) *Royal Free Hospital.* Special Course extending over twelve weeks (not less than 100 hours attendance) entitling the Post-Graduate to a certificate which the Ministry of Health requires for any practitioner who desires to be in charge of a recognized V.D. Centre. Fee £21.

Ante-Natal Clinics: (*For Women Post-Graduates only.*) *East Islington Mothers and Babies Welfare Centre.* Tuesdays 10.30 a.m. to 12.30 p.m. Two Post-Graduates only per clinic. Fee 5s. a time. Arrangements *must* be made in advance with the Fellowship of Medicine.

Clinical Assistantships : *Lambeth Hospital :* Two clinical assistants (men only) per calendar month will be appointed. Daily attendance 10—1 and 2—5. Fee £5 5s. per month.

Hospital for Consumption, Brompton : Tenable for 3 months; eligible for re-appointment. Candidates (men or women) will be attached to an In-Patient Physician and the corresponding Out-Patient Physician, to a Surgeon and/or to a Member of the Staff in charge of any Special Dept. They will be responsible for the performance of their duties to the Members of the Hon. Staff to whom they are attached and may be required to undertake any special work which is considered desirable. Fee £5 5s. per 3 months or portion thereof.

Panel of Teachers : Details of the clinics available every day are given in the Supplement. Fee 5s. per clinic.

A Guide Book, giving details of how to reach the various London Hospitals by tube, tram, or 'bus, can be obtained from the Fellowship. Price 6d. (Members and Associates, 3d.).

recommended to those interested in diseases of the circulatory system. There is much in the book which is informative and stimulating and it should be specially interesting to doctors who desire a summary of work done, but are unable to read the original papers.

THE PREVENTIVE ASPECT OF MEDICINE.

A series of Lectures delivered at King's College Hospital Medical School. London. The Lancet, Ltd. 1934. Price 10/6 net.

This reprint in book form is a valuable work and should be read by all practitioners of medicine. Of the twenty-five essays,

the great majority are first-rate. The subject is stated with great clearness, the difficulties squarely faced, and solutions positively outlined and limitations detailed. The total result is a most stimulating feast of applied medicine, full of interesting information and sidelights, and many important pronouncements. The promoters are to be congratulated on their achievement, and their scheme would bear imitation in other schools. The subjects dealt with include Maternal Mortality, Disease in Infancy, the Pre-school child, the School child, Diet and Dietaries, Vitamins and Inorganic Salts, Milk, Diseases conveyed by Food, Occupational Diseases, Venereal Diseases, Mental Disorder, Immunisation, etc.

Miscellaneous.

This Section deals with New Drugs, Preparations, Surgical Instruments, etc. The description of each article is supplied by the Producer. Particulars regarding insertions, which are free of cost, may be obtained from the Business Manager, Fellowship of Medicine and Post-Graduate Journal, 553, Grand Buildings, W.C.2.

53, Lexham Gardens, Cromwell Road, Kensington, is recommended to post-graduates contemplating a stay in London. It is a small household, well run and personally supervised by Miss Maud Bigsby and her sister.

**A well
run
house.**

All guests receive individual attention and their needs are looked after in every way. Comfortable and quiet quarters are assured, and there is central heating in the living rooms and hall. A feature of the double rooms is that they are both large and well furnished—and it is interesting to note that the house is conveniently situated for most of the hospitals.

An important booklet, well illustrated with pictures in colour and with diagrams has been issued recently by Allen & Hanburys in connection with their HEPOL Liver products. The action of fresh liver or its equivalent in cases of pernicious anæmia, spinal and other conditions is described. It is also claimed that clinical work has demonstrated

**'Hepol'
Liver
Products.**

that the intravenous or intramuscular use of liver extract has important advantages some of which are—rapid response, ease of administration to critically ill patients, and economy.

BISMOSTAB is a sterile 20% suspension of very finely divided Bismuth Metal in isotonic glucose solution, supplied in rubber capped vials ready for use.

**A Boots
Preparation.**

In a profusely illustrated booklet of forty-two pages Boots Pure Drug Co. provide ample evidence in support of their statement that the use of BISMOSTAB ensures:

Freedom from pain; immediate or delayed.

A continuous and steady absorption of the metal between the injections.

Maximum therapeutic results.

Minimum of intolerance.

It is recommended in all cases where bismuth is indicated in the treatment of syphilis, neuro-syphilis and yaws.

LIST OF OVERSEAS MEMBERS OF THE FELLOWSHIP OF MEDICINE AT PRESENT IN ENGLAND.

AUSTRALIA :

- Dr. KEITH BOTTOMLEY, c/o Fellowship of Medicine.
 Dr. C. E. DOLLING, 56, York Place, Harrogate, Yorks.
 Dr. P. C. DOWE, 14, Leinster Square, W.2.
 Dr. D. M. EMBELTON, c/o Fellowship of Medicine.
 Dr. E. M. ETTELSON, c/o National Bank of Australia, Australia House, W.C.2.
 Dr. J. H. FISHER, c/o Australia House, Strand, W.C.2.
 Dr. C. R. FURNER, c/o Fellowship of Medicine.
 Dr. G. E. FOREMAN, c/o Fellowship of Medicine.
 Dr. C. M. GUINEY, c/o Fellowship of Medicine.
 Dr. S. H. HANKINS, c/o Bank of New South Wales, 29, Threadneedle Street, E.C.2.
 Dr. H. H. HARRISON, 13, Chalmers Street, Edinburgh, Scotland.
 Dr. J. L. HAYWARD, c/o Fellowship of Medicine.
 Dr. L. A. HAYWARD, c/o Fellowship of Medicine.
 Dr. W. J. HENDRY, c/o Bank of New South Wales, 29, Threadneedle Street, E.C.2.
 Dr. A. F. HOBSON, The Hospital for Sick Children, Great Ormond Street, W.C.1.
 Dr. T. G. HENZE HOGG, c/o Bank of Australasia, 4, Threadneedle Street, E.C.1.
 Dr. R. N. HOWARD, c/o Fellowship of Medicine.
 Dr. T. J. LEE, c/o E. S. & A. Bank, 5, Gracechurch Street, E.C.
 Dr. H. S. LUCRAFT, c/o Fellowship of Medicine.
 Dr. K. H. MACFARLANE, London House, Caroline Place, W.C.1.
 Dr. E. F. MACKENZIE, c/o Bank of Australasia, 17, Northumberland Avenue, W.C.2.
 Dr. D. K. MCKENZIE, 19, The Avenue, Loughton, Essex.
 Dr. F. P. MORGAN, c/o E. S. & A. Bank, 5, Gracechurch Street, E.C.
 Dr. A. H. MURPHY, c/o Fellowship of Medicine.
 Dr. B. W. NAIRN, c/o Fellowship of Medicine.
 Dr. J. W. OSBORNE, c/o Fellowship of Medicine.
 Dr. C. N. PATON, c/o Bank of New South Wales, 29, Threadneedle Street, E.C.2.
 Dr. T. R. QUINN, c/o Bank of New South Wales, 29, Threadneedle Street, E.C.2.
 Dr. C. W. ROSS, London House, Caroline Place, W.C.1.
 Dr. C. B. SANGSTER, c/o Bank of Australia, 17, Northumberland Avenue, W.C.2.
 Dr. B. A. SERJEANT, London House, Caroline Place, W.C.1.
 Dr. J. A. SMEAL, c/o Commonwealth Bank, Australia House, Strand, W.C.2.
 Dr. A. R. SOUTHWOOD, c/o Fellowship of Medicine.
 Dr. S. L. SPENCER, c/o Bank of New South Wales, 29, Threadneedle Street, W.C.2.
 Dr. R. KEITH STOCKBRIDGE, c/o Bank of Adelaide, 11, Leadenhall Street, E.C.3.
 Dr. W. D. WALKER, c/o National Bank of Australasia, Australia House, Strand, W.C.2.
 Dr. HEYWORTH WATSON, c/o Fellowship of Medicine.
 Dr. S. W. WILLIAMS, c/o Commonwealth Bank, Australia House, Strand, W.C.2.

CANADA :

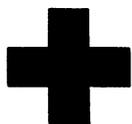
- Dr. J. G. BROWNLEE, Lewisham Hospital, High Street, S.E.13.
 Dr. J. C. DIAMOND, c/o Fellowship of Medicine.
 Dr. H. F. MOSELEY, St. Thomas's Hospital, S.E.1.

NEW ZEALAND :

- Dr. F. J. APPLEBY, 88, Redcliffe Gardens, S.W.10.
 Dr. R. E. BRIDGE, c/o 415, Strand, W.C.2.
 Dr. T. FERGUS, c/o Union Bank of Australia, 71, Cornhill, E.C.
 Dr. M. M. VIDA GRATEN, Royal Maternity Hospital, Belfast.
 Dr. A. S. GRAY, c/o 415, Strand, W.C.2.
 Dr. R. D. KING, c/o Bank of New Zealand, 1, Queen Victoria Street, E.C.1.
 Dr. C. S. MURRAY, c/o 415, Strand, W.C.2.
 Dr. MARGARET THOMSON, c/o 415, Strand, W.C.2.

SOUTH AFRICA :

- Dr. B. BERGER, Samaritan Hospital for Women, Marylebone Road, N.W.1.
 Dr. G. T. DU TOIT, c/o Fellowship of Medicine.
 Dr. W. GILBERT, c/o Standard Bank of South Africa, 9, Northumberland Avenue, W.C.1.
 Dr. RUBY SHARP, c/o Fellowship of Medicine.
 Dr. W. SMITH, c/o Standard Bank of South Africa Ltd., 9, Northumberland Avenue, W.C.2.
 Dr. MARION THOMSON, c/o Messrs. Thos. Cook & Son, Berkeley Street, W.1.



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