

Annotations.

SHUN SHIBBOLETHS.

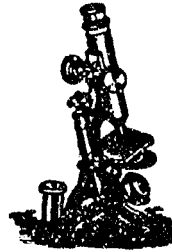
All well-trained nurses will at once admit that diagnosis is outside their province, and, further, they will repudiate the suggestion that they are ever guilty of trespassing on an exclusively medical domain. For the most part this is no doubt true, but there is one malady for which many nurses consider they have an unerring instinct, and which they diagnose in the most casual manner, on the smallest provocation. Thus a nurse studiously refrains from giving a name to a most obvious fractured clavicle, to a well-marked case of enteric fever with the spots full out, or to the latest "chronic bronchitis and emphysema" admitted to the ward. Her business, and she knows it, is to report symptoms, and not further meddle therein. The definition of disease is nothing to do with her. But she will most light-heartedly inform the medical attendant that a patient is hysterical, neurotic, neurasthenic, and so forth. Why? Which is easier of diagnosis, a disease or injury in connection with which there can scarcely be two meanings to the obvious physical symptoms, or diseases concerning the origin of which very little is known, which frequently present symptoms of extreme difficulty to medical practitioners whose professional life has been devoted to their study, and which are intimately concerned with the most delicate, and perhaps least understood portions of the human organism, the brain and the nervous system.

Nurses may well hesitate before they venture to undertake the diagnosis of a case of hysteria.

The only safe attitude for a nurse to assume, and probably the correct one, is that what is commonly described as "hysteria" is a symptom, not a disease at all, and to bend her energies to the discovery of underlying causes, frequently masked by the more prominent symptoms, causes which may vary from the absorption of poisonous products in the intestinal canal as the result of constipation, the existence of obscure uterine trouble, the deterioration, from various reasons of the blood "which is the life," to some lesion of the delicate cerebral matter, or some defective nutrition of the nervous system. It is easy to say, with a touch of contempt in the voice, that a patient is hysterical, it were worthier of the disciples, an important branch of the art of healing, to endeavour to ascertain the reason for this condition.

Medical Matters.

THE CURE OF PHTHISIS.



The communication made by Professor Behring to the International Tuberculosis Congress at Paris as to a specific for tuberculosis aroused considerable interest both when the statement was made and in the lay press since that time. It will be remembered that it was Professor Behring who discovered the anti-diphtheritic serum fifteen years ago. He now states that he is able to recognise with certainty the existence of a curative principle completely different from the anti-toxine principle. The new principle plays an essential part in the immunising action of the bovo vaccine which has been for the last four years successfully tested in relation to bovine consumption. He states that the principle rests on the impregnation of the living cells of the organism with a substance derived from the virus of consumption, and which he calls "T. C."

When this "T. C." has become an integral part of the cells of the organism of the animals so treated, and is metamorphosed by those cells, he calls it "T. X."

In the bacillus of consumption, the "T. X.," or more correctly, the "T. C.," pre-exists, in the form of an agent endowed with a great number of extraordinary qualities. This agent fulfils in the consumptive bacillus the functions of the formative substance. In addition, it possesses fermentative qualities.

This agent is able to fix other substances by electric contact (a phenomenon which has been denominated "adsorption"); besides, it possesses, under certain conditions, assimilative powers. In a word, it represents the quasi-vital principle of the bacillus.

The Professor states, in the process of rendering the bovidæ immune against consumption, the "T. C." of the bacillus has been freed from accidental substances, it exercises a symbiotic action in the interior of the organic cells, particularly in the cellular elements which come from the germinative centres of the lymphatic tissues. The presence of the "T. C." is the cause, on the one hand, of the hypersensibility of Koch's tuberculin, and on the other, of the protective reaction against consumption.

Referring to his method of vaccination against consumption in bovidæ, the Professor said: "I

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)