

the diet, and a little simple medicine will rapidly remove the symptom. The reasoning by which medical men distinguish the one cause of palpitation from the other is termed *diagnosis*; and it is therefore easy to understand how important the necessary skill and experience is, which enables the doctor to distinguish a symptom which means nothing, from the same symptom which reveals a fatal disease. Upon diagnosis, and upon knowledge of the course which the condition, which is discovered, usually takes, depends, what is termed, the *prognosis*, that is to say, the forecast which the doctor will give as to the recovery or death of the patient, or the future progress of the disease.

When any part of the body is examined, it is found to consist of a number of different structures which are termed *tissues*; for example, there may be muscular tissue, nerve tissue, bony or cartilaginous tissue, and these are found in varying quantities scattered throughout the body; the same tissue always having the same constitution in whatever part of the body it may be found. When the tissue is placed under a microscope of sufficient power, it is found to be made up of a large number of similar parts all joined together in some particular manner; the smallest of these constituent parts being termed *cells*; and the tissues differ from each other in the nature and appearance of the cells, and in the manner also in which the cells are united together; just as, for example, pieces of the same coloured wools can be joined together in different ways to form a large number of different patterns. The cells of all tissues of a living animal contain a material which is termed *protoplasm*. When a tissue is examined chemically, it is found that a number of different substances can be obtained from it. For example, in the human body albumen, sugar, fat, common salt, and water are very largely found. All substances are either *simple* or *compound*; the former are called *elements* because they cannot be split up into other substances by any means with which chemists are at present acquainted; the latter are made up of two or more elements united together. Water, for example, is made up of the gaseous elements, hydrogen and oxygen; while the air which we breathe is made up chiefly of nitrogen and oxygen, although carbon is also found in the air combined with oxygen, and, as we shall see hereafter, plays a very important part in the processes of health and disease.

In the next place, let us clearly realise two great principles on which all patients should be nursed. (To be continued.)

Hints on the Nursing of Ear Cases.

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It frequently happens that a nurse is called upon—perhaps at a moment's notice—to nurse an ear case. In nine cases out of ten her previous experience of such cases is *nil*, and she consequently feels very much at sea. In the end she has to fall back upon general surgical principles, and the surgeon in charge is either obliged to teach his nurse or to do much of the work himself. But a very small company of the cap and apron army has ever served a term at an ear hospital and, with one notable exception, no general hospital takes any serious view of the necessity for training its nurses in what it probably (and wrongly) regards as the most trivial of specialities. Ophthalmic nurses are fairly plentiful, gynaecological nurses are almost a drug in the market, but good ear nurses are few and very far between.

The fault lies with the general hospitals and could be easily remedied. It is not possible for many nurses to pass through a special course at an ear hospital, but it would be quite easy for every nurse in a large general hospital with a good training school attached, to receive good instruction in certain special points in aural nursing, points which mean a very large factor in successful treatment and which could easily and well be performed by the nurse. Perhaps when the efficient Registration of Nurses is a *fait accompli* a course of special training in all the departments of medicine and surgery will be included in the curriculum prior to certification and registration, and it will then be more easy to obtain an efficient otological nurse.

Considering, therefore, the difficulties which lie in the way of obtaining the necessary knowledge for aural nursing, the few hints which it is the object of this paper to supply, will be readily acceptable. I am perfectly aware that I have said most of what I have to say before, but is sufficiently important to bear repetition.

One of the first things that a nurse may be required to do is to prepare a patient for an operation upon the ear. This requires very careful performance, for much of the ultimate success of the operation may depend upon the efficiency with which the organ has been prepared. The general preparation of the patient does not differ from that for any surgical operation, but the *local* preparation requires thoroughness and care. In the case of minor operations

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