

for strengthening the nerves and medicines for healing the nerves, medicines for curing diseases of the tongue, for the removal of lice and fleas, for ears hard of hearing, the secret book of the physician, the science of the beating of the heart, and the science of the heart as taught by the priestly physician Neb-Secht. The two last-mentioned contain a more advanced teaching of the heart's function than that it is the seat of reason.

Space will not allow of more than one example of the directions given for diagnosis and treatment, but the following may be taken as fairly illustrative:—"Rules for the re-het, that is, suffering in the pit of the stomach. When thou findest anybody with the hardening of his re-het, and when eating he feels a pressure in his bowels, his stomach is swollen, and he feels ill while walking, like one who is suffering with heat in the back, then look at him when he is outstretched, and if thou findest his bowels hot and a hardening in his stomach, then say to thyself, 'This is a liver complaint.' Then make thyself a remedy according to the secrets in botanical knowledge from the plant Pa chestet and from scraps of dates. Mix it and put it in water. The patient may drink it on four mornings to purge his body. If after that thou findest both sides of his bowels, namely, the right one hot, and the left one cool, then say of it 'That is bile.' Look at him again, and if thou findest his bowels entirely cold, then say to thyself, 'His liver is cleansed and purified; he has taken the medicine, the medicine has taken effect.'"

The work is full of prescriptions, of which the following are two examples:—"Beginning of the Book of Medicines.—For sick bowels: Caraway seed, 1·64 dram, goose fat $\frac{1}{2}$ dram, milk 1 tenat; boil, stir, and eat. For the same: Pomegranate-seed $\frac{1}{2}$ dram, sycamore fruit (?) $\frac{1}{2}$ dram, beer 1 tenat, treat as above." The weights and measures much resemble our own, and our signs \varnothing , \mathfrak{z} and \mathfrak{z} are said to be derived from ancient Egyptian monuments. Their unit of weight, according to Ebers, was equal to about 48 English grains, and their unit of volume (the tenat) to about three-fifths of a litre.

The Ebers papyrus contains many priestly litanies and incantations to be said at the patient's bedside, but it must be remembered that these were of a religious nature, magic and sorcery being forbidden by the most severe laws.

The Berlin papyrus, discovered by Mr. Passalacqua near the pyramid of Sakarah, near Memphis, is younger than the Ebers specimen, which it somewhat resembles. Its date has been fixed at about the XIX. Dynasty (between 1400 and 1200 B.C.). It contains many prescriptions for diseases whose natures are set forth at the head of each remedy. The drugs are generally animal or vegetable, and are made up in the form of ointments, clysters, emetics, &c., some of them being of an exceptionally repugnant nature.

Anatomy is thus dismissed:—"There are thirty-two vessels in the head which bring the breath from the interior and communicate it to all parts of the body. There are two in the breasts which conduct the heat to the fundament; two in the legs. If there is disease in the legs, in every direction, with suffering and languor, it is the vessel situated in the leg which has become ill." Similarly, two vessels for the arms, two for the occiput, two for the sinciput, two in the eyes, and two in the nostrils are described. When taking remedies, patients are directed to pronounce certain mystic invocations to Isis. Many recipes are given for love-philtres and the like, and among the drugs are mentioned antimony, nitre, magnesia, and iron.

But little can be said of ancient Egyptian surgery. Surgical instruments have been found, and one of the six Hermetic books was devoted to them and their use. Flint knives were employed for circumcision, and there is a mutilated bas-relief extant representing that operation. Mummies have been discovered whose bones bear evidence of fracture, but in most cases these fractures have been very badly set, and in some they have not been set at all.

It seems strange that, despite embalment and, possibly, *post-mortem* examinations, the Egyptians should have possessed so limited a knowledge of anatomy; but the explanation probably lies in their religious belief and the extreme reverence in which the dead were held. To mutilate a corpse was to heavily handicap both dead and living in the future state, and the principle of treating others as they themselves would be treated deterred them from too closely prying into anatomical mysteries.

What they knew was borrowed by the Greeks; from the Greeks the Romans derived, in turn, their knowledge, and as civilisation spread so the science of medicine slowly journeyed toward perfection, and reached its highest with the dawn of the second period of Egyptian prosperity.

(To be continued.)

Hospitality to the Matrons' Council.

Miss Edith Debenham has most kindly offered hospitality to any member of the Matrons' Council who may not be otherwise engaged for luncheon between the meetings at 20, Hanover Square on May 8th. Luncheon will be served at St. Andrew's House, Mortimer Street (close to Middlesex Hospital), from 1 to 2.30, at which the members will be heartily welcome by Mrs. Radburn.

A Nurse's Suicide.

"Suicide while of unsound mind" was the verdict on Wednesday in the case of Emma Bowerman, aged thirty-two, nurse at a home for invalids in Devonshire Street, Portland Place. She drank carbolic acid because "she had nobody to talk to"!

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