


## Medical Matters.

### BLOOD DIAGNOSIS.



Much has been recently written on the possibility of distinguishing between human and animal blood by means of serum reactions. Prof. Florence, reviewing recently in the *Archives d'Antropologie Criminelle* Dr. Biffi's work on this subject, reports some experiments of his own in the diagnosis of the blood of different individuals. If fresh human blood be mixed under the microscope with an aqueous solution of a bloodstain from the same individual no agglutination of the corpuscles occurs, but if the fresh blood of another person be employed immediate and marked agglutination occurs. To obtain this effect, however, the bloodstain must not be more than about fifteen days old, for after a longer time, especially if any variations in health have taken place, the new blood acquires the power of being agglutinated by the aqueous extract of the old.

### CONSTIPATION OF WOMEN.

Writing in the *Medical Brief*, Dr. Silas Hubbard says:—I have repeatedly seen it stated in medical journals that women are more subject to constipation than men. I will endeavour to account for it by saying that the transverse colon is longer than in men, and that the sigmoid flexure is more acute than in men, all of which tends to delay the substances in the colon passing into the rectum. Women have appendicitis much less often than men. I will account for this by saying that men usually urinate while standing up, which is unfavourable to passing flatus, and thus more gas is accumulated in the colon, and the appendix is also dilated with gas, which allows faecal substances to pass into the appendix, which is the usual cause of appendicitis; while women usually sit while urinating, which gives full liberty to the flatus passing, and thus the appendix is not as often dilated with gas, consequently they are not so subject to appendicitis as men. I will say to both men and women, to avoid constipation and appendicitis secure one passage per day by rubbing up over the ascending colon with the right hand, at the same time rubbing over the transverse colon with the left hand from right to left till the colon and rectum are emptied.

### TEMPER POWDERS.

Sir Lauder Brunton, according to a contemporary, is inclined to believe that ill-temper is often the result of disordered nerves, and can be controlled and modified in a great measure by drugs. In some gouty people 20 grains of bicarbonate of potash, with 10 or 20 of bromide of potassium, taken when the feeling of irritability comes on, frequently soothes it, and it has the further effect of lessening the worry, even in those who are not irritable.

### X RAY DANGERS.

It is hardly to be supposed that an agent so potent as the X-rays should not possess powers necessitating their most careful handling by those constantly concerned in their application. Thus, in an address recently delivered before the Rontgen Society, its new president, Dr. Thurston Holland, of Liverpool, said:—"I do not think that a serious word of warning to those who have constantly to use the X-rays is out of place."

"One may expose one's hands to the rays with impunity for years, but the risk is great, and I have no doubt that the effect of these constant exposures, so to speak, accumulates, and that as time goes on the hands get more and more 'tender' to the rays.

"It matters not very much whether the effects produced are caused by the X-rays themselves or some other agent; whatever the cause the active X-ray tube is a danger to the operator, and one cannot be too careful in guarding oneself against this danger."

Another X-ray specialist, Mr. Ernest Harnack, lecturing recently on this subject to the United Wards Club at the Cannon Street Hotel, himself a sufferer from the "dermatitis" to which those engaged in using X-rays and high frequency currents are liable, illustrated his lecture by throwing on the screen a photograph of his own diseased hands. The course the disease takes is first the cracking and breaking up of the nails; then abscesses form at the roots necessitating their extraction; later small warts appear on the back of the hands, which have a tendency to become cancerous.

It is satisfactory to learn that both Dr. Holland and Mr. Harnack are of opinion that if due care is exercised no harm can follow a properly-conducted X-ray examination. Lead-glass screens, which are impervious to the rays, should be employed to screen them from parts not under treatment, and the operator should also wear gloves.

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