

Beware of the Dog!

By Percy Hayes Carpenter.

WE ALL LOVE DOGS, yet quite unconsciously they may convey disease. One is hydatid disease which may remain latent for years or produce a crisis suddenly such as liver abscess or symptoms due to pressure or rupture of the cyst that is formed.

Hydatid cysts grow slowly and are the result of a small tapeworm, the taenia echinococcus, which exists in the stomach of the dog. The resulting larvae are passed in their excreta or may be conveyed to the food of humans by contact with the dog's tongue or muzzle soiled from the anus of another dog. They may reach the human stomach by means of lettuce or watercress or other green vegetables similarly infected. Here the larval envelope is destroyed setting free small worms with hooklets which make their way to the blood stream and travel usually to the liver where blood is plentiful. In the liver they become blocked in a small capillary blood vessel where they shed their hooklets and form cysts known as hydatid cysts.

The hydatid contains clear fluid and forms daughter cysts on its inner layer which may travel free of their parent cyst to any part of the body. The location of a hydatid cyst varies widely. It may settle in the liver and form for itself a protecting envelope from the tissue of surrounding structures or it may remain latent for years or be discovered accidentally by a doctor in a routine examination of the abdomen. On the other hand the cyst may rupture. If it ruptures into the stomach or intestine it may cure itself, the fluid being evacuated and the cyst wall dying a natural death, but if it ruptures into the biliary passages intense jaundice will occur with an abscess the result of biliary infection. The enlarged liver may press on the diaphragm muscle causing breathlessness. The hydatid may wander to other fields. It has been found in the brain and spinal cord causing paralysis of unknown origin and on discovery a complete cure. A cyst has found its way to the heart rupturing the pericardium with sudden death or upwards into the pleura causing effusion in that cavity. Commonly the hydatid produces no symptoms and dies a natural death.

Its tumour-like tendency has been confused with cancer, syphilis and other tumours of the body. Cancer is associated with emaciation and illness and may be easily differentiated, for hydatid can exist in health. Syphilis may be discovered by blood tests and hydatid may be diagnosed by examining the fluid for hooklets or the blood corpuscles for eosinophiles which in hydatid disease are much increased. Also the hydatid cyst, if enlarged, pepetrates a thrill on palpation known as the hydatid thrill and once felt is diagnostic. If the cyst ruptures an urticarial rash occurs due to the setting free of the fluid. This rash is the one present in food poisoning. Lastly, the hydatid may settle in bone causing a fracture of unknown origin.

Most of us keep a dog.

Have any of us hidden hydatids within us, hydatids that may cause sudden rupture or produce a fatal abscess? How many of us pet or even kiss our dogs without thought. We do it to please ourselves, not the dog. He hates the whole business. How fond we are of salads, lettuces, watercress, fresh vegetables—and how we enjoy them. What can be done to prevent hydatid occurrence? In places where it is commonest fruit should be washed with boiled water and raw vegetables should be cooked or left severely alone. Hydatid is commonest where dogs are prevalent in Australia, New Zealand, or Greenland, but there are cases to be seen in most large hospitals in Britain. They are there, for they've been unlucky; the hydatid has given trouble or its presence discovered by a doctor. In either case operation is called

for because the hydatid is a potential source of danger. The cyst is usually excised and a cure effected but the task is a precarious one for if it ruptures in transit and its contents spilled other cysts will form.

Beware of the dog!

The Dear Animals.

POLLY.

PARROTS ARE VERY MUCH TO THE FORE just now, so perhaps it may interest parrot lovers to hear about Polly.

Polly was very fortunate in her mistress, for she was very fond of her and the bird returned her affection.

It was going to attend her mistress at the birth of her child that I first met Polly.

From the first she took a dislike to me. She saw less and less of her mistress, and I suppose put the blame on me.

One day my patient asked me to bring in some "Chillies" for Polly. This I did, and as the baby had not arrived, she and I prepared to have a quiet time by the fire after the mid-day meal. I had my back to Polly's cage, and every now and again I felt pellets aimed at me, but when I turned Polly appeared to be dozing on her perch.

This went on at short intervals all the afternoon. I began to wonder if I were developing nerves, and at last my patient asked me if there was anything wrong. When I told her she laughed heartily, and said, "That's that naughty Polly." She was pelting me with the "Chillies" I had been out to buy for her.

After tea, Polly's mistress said she would have her out of the cage for a bit. I decided to keep as near the door as possible, but I need not have bothered myself. She ignored me altogether, and began kissing her mistress, first her eyes then her ears, lips, hair, and even her nose. She then hopped on the table and kissed her dear mistress's hands. It was quite pretty to see her.

In due time the baby arrived, and poor Polly was most disconsolate without her mistress. She looked so miserable that I felt quite sorry for her. Polly's mistress always asked after her, I think she knew she would be missed.

Then one day she asked her husband to bring Polly in to see her; and this he did, but both he and I were cowards where the bird was concerned.

Polly was delighted to see her mistress again, and she was let out of her cage and at once began to kiss her mistress very gently.

Then the baby was introduced to Polly. She looked a bit crestfallen at the idea of having to share the dear mistress with a baby; but I feel sure that her love and intelligence helped her to understand that never again would she hold undisputed sway in her mistress's affections.

A. M. H.

What to Read.

BIOGRAPHY AND MEMOIRS

- "Fritz Kreisler." Louis P. Lochner.
- "Fonteyn." William Chappell.
- "The Last of the Radicals." C. V. Wedgwood.

FICTION

- "The Heart of the House." Naomi Jacob.
- "Through a Glass Darkly." Eden Phillpotts.
- "The Spoils of Time." Philip Gibbs.
- "Brave Company." Guthrie Wilson.
- "Ophelia." Viola Meynell.
- "The Charlie Trees." B. Dew Roberts.
- "The Broken Root." Arturo Barea.

MISCELLANEOUS

- "I Took a Journey." Compton Mackenzie.
- "Pavilion." Ursula Bloom. (A portrait of Mrs. Fitzherbert.)

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