

# NEW AND STRANGE DISEASES.

What the Doctors are Finding out Every Year or So.

A new disease is officially recognized by the medical faculty about once in six months on an average, and one celebrated London surgeon enjoys a sort of jocular reputation among his professional brethren for his faculty in hunting up and naming them.

Many "new" ailments are new only in name. They have existed all along, but it was reserved for the nineteenth century to give them the dignity of special names. Others, however, are really new diseases, arising out of new conditions and occupations of life in this stage of invention.

For instance, "caisson disease" could not very well have existed many years ago. Caissons are air-tight chambers, supplied with air by means of pumps, and used in building and tunnelling operations under water. The air in them is at considerable pressure, the effect of which upon the lungs and small blood vessels is to produce a perfectly well-marked disease, which is very often fatal, and is in any case difficult to cure. It may be explained that the transition from a compressed atmosphere into ordinary air would probably be fatal in numerous cases, if not in all, were it performed very quickly. But, fortunately, provision has to be made in every instance to avoid the escape of air from the caissons, and when the workmen enter or leave them, they have to pass through what is called an air-lock, a room with air-tight doors at each end, one door communicating with the caisson and the other leading to the open door.

On leaving the caisson the latter door is of course closed by an attendant before the other door is opened. The people who go to go out then enter the air-lock and close the caisson door, after which air is suffered to escape gradually, until the lock is at the same pressure as the air outside, when the exterior door is open and the party emerges. A workman who has been for a few hours in the caisson will experience a loud ringing in the ears as this takes place. Now then, after being in the open air a quarter of an hour or so, he will suddenly become insensible, stricken with caisson disease, and very careful medical treatment is necessary to restore the body and air-vessels to their healthy state.

What are called "occupational" diseases, or disorders arising from the nature of various trades, have been much more accurately noted of late than ever before. "Painter's colic" has, of course, been long observed, and so has the peculiar palsy called "writers cramp," which is caused by a too frequent use of the pen. It is a curious fact, and possibly an indication for preventive treatment, that no case of writer's cramp has ever been recorded from the use of gold pens; it is only steel and quill pens that cause it, but possibly people who can afford gold nibs are not obliged to write to the same excess as their poorer brethren of the desk. The type-writer not only is a substitute for the pen in such cases, but is also directly curative, the finger motion required being beneficial to the paralyzed muscles. But "type-writer's nails" is, or are, a disease incidental to the use of writing machines. The disorder is a trifling one, and consists in splitting and deforming of the nails from constantly touching the keys. Pianists sometimes suffer from a similar discomfort, which is avoided by keeping the finger-nails very short, otherwise they speedily become thickened, spotted, and very brittle.

"Wool sorter's disease," another name for what doctors call anthrax, was first observed when mohair had just been introduced into commerce. It is occasioned by a bacillus, or disease germ, which is extraordinarily quick to find its way into the body by the slightest wound or soreness of the skin, when it produces a malignant pustule, and often causes death. Less serious is "washerwoman's scall," a sort of eczema arising from the irritation produced by the strong soaps used in the wash-tub. "Housemaid's knee," a disease most laughed at by those who have not suffered from it. The "dropped hands" of lead-workers are but the symptoms of the cumulative poisoning by which they are paralyzed, which is largely aggravated in many cases by the neglect of ordinary cleanliness, whereby lead finds its way into the system with the food, etc. But the gradual poisoning of dry-paint packers and of operatives in enamelled iron seems to be inseparable from these trades.

"Cyclist's stoop" and "lawn tennis elbow," though now gravely recorded as authentic diseases, and indeed provided with Latin names among the faculty, can scarcely be considered more than grandiloquent names for round shoulders and cramp respectively. Telephoning produces a liability to nervousness that will at this rate, soon be called "Exchange girl's nerve." A case of a "cornet player's cramp," was lately described in the Lancet.

Among diseases rather strange than new may be mentioned "phossy jaw," or necrosis—an awful disease contracted by workers in match factories when ordinary phosphorus is used. The lower jaw-bone decays in a most painful manner, the gums become sore, and the teeth are loosened. "Word-blindness," a mental disability on the part of the patient to read any word without spelling it out, though not necessarily aloud. In reading we do not, of course, spell our words—if we have passed the infantile stage, that is—and inability to read without doing so is a recognized sign of a mind disordered. "Agraphia," or sudden inability to write, is a kindred ailment, and a tendency to mis-spell in writing and to misplace words in speech, to anything like a noticeable extent, are both recognized by medical men among the early marks of incipient insanity.

## One of Lincoln's Stories.

Speaking of Lincoln's numberless stories Senator Voorhees recalls one he once told during the argument in a lawsuit. The lawyer on the other side was a good deal of a glib talker, but not reckoned as deeply profound or much of a thinker. He was rather reckless and irresponsible in his speechmaking also, and would say anything to a jury which happened to enter his head. Lincoln in his address to the jury referring to all these said: "My friend on the other side is all right, or would be all right were it not for the peculiarity I am about to chronicle. His habit—of which you have witnessed a very painful specimen in his

argument to you in this case—of reckless assertion and statements without grounds, need not be imputed to him as a moral fault or as telling of a moral blemish. He can't help it. For reason which, gentlemen of the jury, you and I have not time to study here, as deplorable as they are surprising, the oratory of the gentleman completely suspends all action of his mind. The moment he begins to talk his mental operations cease. I never knew of but one thing which compared with my friend in this particular. That was a small steamboat. Back in the days when I performed my part as a keel boatman I made the acquaintance of a trifling little steamboat which used to bustle and puff and wheeze about in the Sangamon River. It had a five-foot boiler and a seven-foot whistle, and every time it whistled it stopped."

## How he Avoided Sea-Sickness.

"Some people," said an old sea captain the other day, are afraid of sea-sickness, and hesitate to travel by water because of this fear. A friend of mine came on board the steamer Plymouth the other evening in a very happy frame of mind. He had been troubled for a long time, when off Southampton, by a feeling of nausea; but now he was positive that he had found a way to avoid it by going to bed as soon as he came on board, and remaining there until he arrived at his destination.

"On this occasion he bade me a hurried good night, climbed into his berth, and in a few minutes was fast asleep. He slept like a top until seven o'clock next morning, with never a qualm of mal de mer to disturb his slumbers. He arose delighted, satisfied that he had at last found a remedy for the disorder which had caused him so much misery. He went down into the dining-room and ate a hearty meal, though somewhat surprised that so few passengers were stirring. Going on deck with a satisfied look on his face and a toothpick in his mouth, he met me.

"Say, old man," he exclaimed, "that sleeping racket of mine worked like a charm. Never had a touch of it all night."

"I smiled.

"What are you grinning for?" he asked, in surprise.

"Because," I answered, "the Plymouth" has been tied to her dock all night. She has not moved a foot. There was something the matter with her machinery and we had to transfer the passengers. No one suspected that a man would go to bed at six o'clock, and so you were overlooked in the transfer."

## An Unexpected Glass.

An actor in a provincial theatre was one evening "billed" to play the Duke in the tragedy of "Othello." Before going on the stage he gave directions to a girl-of-all-work who attended on the wardrobe to bring him a glass of the best whiskey. Not wishing to go out, as the evening was wet, the girl employed a little boy who happened to be standing about to execute the commission, and the little fellow (no person being present to stop him), without considering the propriety of such an act, coolly walked on to the stage and delivered his message—the state of affairs at this ridiculous juncture being exactly as follows: The Senate was assembled, and the speaker was:

Brabantio: "So did I yours. Good your Grace, pardon me; Neither my place nor ought I heard of business Hath rais'd me from my bed, nor doth the general care Take hold of me, for my particular grief Is of so flood-gate and o'erbearing nature That it engulfs and swallows other sorrows And it is still itself."

Duke: "Why, what's the matter?" Here the little boy walked on to the stage with a glass of whiskey and thus delivered his message:

"It's just the whisky, sir; and I couldn't get on at fourpence, so yer awn the landlord a penny; and he says it's time you was payin' what's doon i' the book."

## Not His Business.

An old custom once prevailed in a remote place of giving a clock to anyone who would truthfully swear he had minded his own business alone for a year and a day, and had not meddled with his neighbors'. Many came, but few, it any, gained the prize, which was more difficult to win than the Dunmow fitch of bacon. Though they swore on the four Gospels, and held out their hands in certain hope, some hitch was sure to be made somewhere; and for all their asseverations the clock remained stationary on its shelf, no one being able to prove his absolute immunity from un-called-for interference. At last a young man came with a perfectly clear record, and the clock seemed as if it was at last about to change owners. Then said the custodian:

"Oh, a young man was here yesterday, and made mighty sure he was going to have the clock, but he didn't."

"Said the young man seeking the prize:—"

"And why didn't he get it?"

"What's that to you?" snapped out the custodian; "that's not your business, and you don't get the clock!"

## How to Look Cool Suddenly.

If you come in after a long round of shopping and receive a sudden summons to the parlor to meet some unexpected guest, do not be dismayed at the crimson face which meets your eye as you stand before your dressing table mirror. Many women think the only way to cool off is to bathe the face lavishly in cold water. This is a great mistake, and with a thin skin will only intensify the color, and the last state of this woman shall be worse than the first.

Dash the water on throat and neck as freely as you choose, particularly at the back of the neck, but if the face is bathed at all, let it be done sparingly, then sponge it with Florida water and lastly apply a generous coating of rice powder. You will look ghastly, but let the powder remain while you add the few necessary touches to your toilet. Then, just as you are about to descend to the parlor, dust off all superfluous powder lightly, and you will welcome your guest fresh and cool not only in appearance, but in reality.

## A Pen Portrait of Pasteur.

The great master does not look to be seventy years of age as he sits behind his desk, his elbow on the table, his hand supporting his head. His hair and beard are still iron-gray; the hair is concealed largely by the silk skull-cap he always wears, but the beard is abundant. The eyes are as penetrating, as full of ardor as ever. It is only when he speaks or moves that one

sees the ravages of the paralysis which overtook him twenty-five years ago, after his terrible three years of labor in the little house at Alais, investigating the disease of the silk-worm. The whole left side has been since then nearly useless. His speech is hesitating, his motion difficult, but in spite of his feebleness he spares no pains to interest his guest. One talks with M. Pasteur with the ease and naturalness of the fireside.—McClure's Magazine.

## THINGS OF VALUE.

It grumbling could be exchanged for gold, how many of us would soon be rich.

Other Cough Medicines have had their day, but Putner's Emulsion has come to stay, because its so nice and so good.

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I was cured of Black erysipelas by MINARD'S LINIMENT. J. W. RUGGLES. Inglesville.

It is very foolish to give your children good advice, while you are setting them a bad example.

## Money-Making Women.

In 1890 there were in America about 275,000 women engaged in money-making occupations as follows: One hundred and ten lawyers, 155 ministers, 320 authors, 588 journalists, 2,61 artists, 2,136 architects, chemists and pharmacists, 2,106 stock raisers and ranchers, 5,135 Government clerks, 2,438 physicians and surgeons, 13,182 professional musicians, 56,800 farmers and planters, 21,071 clerks and bookkeepers, 14,465 heads of commercial houses, and 155,000 public school teachers.

## Very Blue and Beautiful.

A forget-me-not luncheon is now given by the bridesmaids of an engaged young woman in honor of her approaching marriage. The decorations are all of blue, the guests wear posies of the forget-me-not dear to lovers, and the flowers at the feast, all in blue, are arranged in heart and true lover's knots.

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