

The Physician

Written Specially for The Western Home Monthly



HE true scope as well as the powers and limitations of the medical man are often imperfectly understood; the various functions of the physician—cure, alleviation, prevention, and teaching—are better defined by the Latin cura, "care," than by its derivative, "cure," in its modern sense. To care for the health of the whole community is a far wider field of usefulness than to cure the sick individually.

In his work among the sick the physician is too often viewed as a kind of sorcerer, and he is invoked to use the mysterious chemicals he is supposed to have. How many people there are to-day who imagine that if they could get hold of the doctor's prescription-book they could perform wonderful cures! Yet few drugs that we use in medicine have any certainty of action. Indeed, of the more than four thousand drugs in use to-day, about the action of less than twenty is there any real certainty.

Surgical and other remedial measures are more certain and positive in their action; indeed, these often act like

the ripe and experienced physician whose saddle-bag contains no specifics, and whose remedies are by no means numerous.

It is to be feared that the physician has sometimes permitted or encouraged an exaggerated estimate of his power and importance. The physician is human, and when the patient gets well he has not the heart to dispel the illusion which inspires grateful praise. Perhaps he feels that these are in some measure his due, to offset the unjust criticism which all physicians receive. But in the end he must remember that any mistaken idea of his powers will react when he fails to save a case which no power on earth could save, when it is said of him that he utterly failed to grasp the situation. Therefore the interests of both physician and patient are always best served by both having an intelligent comprehension of the scope, the powers, and the limitations of medical science.

The cure of disease will always be an important element in the physician's work, and the care of the incurable sick, the alleviation of pain and suffering, and the prolongation of

stead of being looked upon as a necessary evil, whose visits are avoided as long as possible, and are at all times, a source of uneasiness. He should be a sanitary officer of the family, with whom there should be free intercourse. He should be consulted on a hundred personal and family questions which may perhaps influence the symmetrical development of a child, if not, indeed, shape the destiny of a man.

The eradication of inherited tendencies; the direct improvement of the physical and mental measures of stocks; the development of a hardy constitution in weak children; the stoppage of many fatal organic diseases in their incipency; the arrest of acute inflammations at a time when this is possible; the ensuring of longevity and a sound old age—these are some of the things which the physician of to-day is able, but which he is not often permitted, to do.

It must be admitted that it is impossible to go into details with every patient; yet it is likewise true that, to some extent, every patient can be made to comprehend some of the salient features of the case in question.

Teaching should be an important part of the physician's daily labors. Medical advice given in the abstract is wholly barren of results. The instruction should be of such a character as to convey clear ideas of pertinent physiological and scientific facts. As in all teaching, the living voice is effective in a greater degree than the



STONE RESIDENCE AND BARN OF JOHN HUTSON, WOLSELEY, ASSA

magic; but in the large proportion of cases the physician is far from being a magician and has no absolute power over disease. He is simply one learned in the science of medicine, and he should likewise be well learned in all the collateral sciences and experienced in the management of sickness; but he is only one factor in, yet the chief of all the forces operating for the maintenance of life and against death. The nurse, the patient himself, his friends, and often his ancestors, influence the result for good or for evil.

The power of the physician against disease and death lies chiefly in his trained faculties of observation; in his superior insight into details and particulars; in his comprehensive grasp of medical principles; in his profound knowledge of all the conditions which are for and against life; in his wise judgment, his honesty of purpose, his sympathy of heart, and conscientious application. These are the qualities of brain and heart that enable a physician to nurse the flickering flame of life back to health and strength where a less skilful hand would extinguish it forever.

Like the architect, the builder, and the general, the doctor is a director of forces, a supervisor, an exerciser of good judgment; but his equipment is intellectual more than physical; his power to cure is oftener in his head than in his satchel.

How notable in the inexperienced and newly initiated young physician is the readiness to know and possess the very "specific" for any ailment that may come to him, let the same be acute or chronic, as compared with

life are priceless beneficences; but the most valuable service which scientific medicine is capable of rendering lies in the direction of the prevention of disease in the family, in the state, and in the nation.

Indeed, we cannot fail to realize that this is the great era of preventive medicine. To-day it is known that nearly every disease has its own specific germ origin; and the laws that govern and control this germ in its every form are becoming known. Herein lies our greatest hope, for the ounce of prevention will ever remain better than the pound of cure. Even though medicine has made marvelous strides in the recent past, it must be acknowledged that our resources are still wanting in view of the severity of many maladies. Therefore it behooves us to use our best efforts to prevent the development of disease.

Let one of our magnificent ocean vessels be sailing the high seas under a tropic sun. On the horizon there rises a small cloud. Its appearance is unheeded, and though the cloud waxes there is still no awakening. When presently the storm breaks upon the ship with vicious fury, a wild rush is made to take in sail and to set the vessel in order, but it is too late. Such neglect would be criminally bad seamanship, but it is an illustration of what occurs every day upon the uncertain sea of life.

The efficiency of the medical man will be immensely increased when his relation to the family is more constant instead of being intermittent and irregular. The doctor should come and go like the clergyman or priest, in-

printed page can ever be; indeed, the talent which some physicians have for clearly illustrating a subject or emphasizing a fact is an important element in their success.

Burdock BLOOD BITTERS

Turns Bad Blood into Rich Red Blood.

No other remedy possesses such perfect cleansing, healing and purifying properties.

Externally, heals Sores, Ulcers, Abscesses, and all Eruptions.

Internally, restores the Stomach, Liver, Bowels and Blood to healthy action. If your appetite is poor, your energy gone, your ambition lost, B.B.B. will restore you to the full enjoyment of happy vigorous life.

When writing advertisers, please mention The Western Home Monthly.

FOR SUMMER WEAR

With the advent of Summer the demand comes for Dainty Novelties to go with the Summer Blouse and Summer Hat. Here we have three of the newest Hat Pins and a Blouse Set of much attractiveness. :: :: ::



Three New Hat Pins

STERLING SILVER EXTRA LONG PINS
EACH SENT IN SEPARATE BOX

Illustrations Exact Size

No. E25. Rose Hat Pin, 25 Cents
No. E26. Head Hat Pin, 25 Cents
No. E27. Swallow Hat Pin, 60 Cents

New Baroque Pearl Waist Set

No. E25. With Gold Filled Pins, \$1.25 complete

No. E26. With Solid 14k. Gold Pins, \$3.75 complete

Each Set in Satin Lined Box

Illustrations Exact Size

Any of the above sent by mail upon receipt of price. Each piece we guarantee to be of the highest quality. We refund your money cheerfully upon return of any article that is not satisfactory.

**HENRY BIRKS
AND SONS**

GOLDSMITHS AND SILVERSMITHS

350-352 MAIN ST. :: WINNIPEG, MAN.