

# LABORATORY METHODS FOR THE GENERAL PRACTITIONER

## SIXTH PAPER

*The Gonococcus.*—Like every other manipulation in the laboratory, the staining of the gonococcus for microscopic examination, though not complicated, must be carried out with the greatest care and attention to detail. Every bit of work done in the laboratory is more or less delicate, and the demonstration of the gonococcus is no exception to this rule. The finding of gonococci in pus from a urethritis is positive proof of a specific gonococcic infection.

Cases of simple or catarrhal urethritis do exist, but rare, and no matter how typical the clinical signs exhibit, one is not justified in making a positive diagnosis, until after a complete examination shows conclusively the presence of gonococcus in the pus or urine.

Before proceeding with the technique, it may be stated that on account of other bacteria becoming prominent in the field with gonococci, simple staining of the smear should not be depended upon. Another point is, that the practice of spreading the small drop of pus between the cover-glasses and drawing them apart is objectionable, as it disarranges the elements of the cells.

*First Method, Simple Staining.*—The smear is prepared by placing a small quantity of the urethral pus on a cover-glass and spreading it thinly with the platinum wire loop; the specimen then is dried in air, then passed three times through a flame to fix it.

*To Stain*—The gonococcus stains readily with the aniline dyes, of which methylene blue is the best adopted for this simple process.