

"DOCTOR'S ORDERS."—"Doctor's orders" are two often looked upon by the laity as arbitrary enactments of professional pedantry, which your true Briton shows "the freedom that runs in his blood" by defying or evading. Nor is this absurdity confined to the ignorant, for one often hears people who should know better boasting of their deliberate neglect of advice which they paid a big fee to obtain. The moral which we wish to enforce has lately been pointed by a case which occurred in the London Hospital in a manner which we hope will bring it home, at least in some measure, to the public mind. A man suffering from typhoid had some grapes secretly given him by a friend whom he asked to procure them for him. He became worse soon after eating them, and in three days he died from perforation of the intestine. The coroner trusted that the public would take warning by the case, and all medical officers of hospitals and nurses will, for the sake of their own comfort, if from no higher feeling, fervently echo the wish. Melancholy and constantly repeated experience makes them dread "visiting days," as almost inevitably followed by general rise of temperature throughout the ward, and too often by intestinal disturbance of one kind or another. It is hardly to be wondered at that fruit, and even food, should be smuggled in by sympathetic relatives, for in convalescence from acute ailments the appetite is often ravenous, almost beyond belief. This is naturally hailed by the friends as a sign of returning health, and it seems hard to withhold the food which is so eagerly craved for. It cannot be too widely known that, in typhoid fever especially, what is wanted before everything is rest for the ulcerated intestine, and unexpected death, when everything seemed to promise speedy recovery, has often been due to the clamorous hunger of the patient overthrowing the judgment of the medical attendant. If this can happen even to well informed professional men, it is a thousand times more likely to occur to persons who have no knowledge of the patient's real condition, and only see his suffering. There is probably not a hospital in the kingdom in which relapses and disasters due to the ignorance of well meaning friends are not of frequent occurrence.—*British Medical Journal*.

DR. OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES AT EIGHTY.—Dr. Holmes celebrated his eightieth birthday recently. His house was filled with children and flowers and the mementoes of friends. He was serene and happy, with just a slight infirmity in respect of his organs of hearing. He was able to illustrate in his own person, his dictum, made some months before, that it was "better to be eighty years young than forty years old." The year 1809 was no mean year, for it gave us Holmes, Gladstone, Tennyson, Lincoln and Darwin. A newspaper paragraph has appeared stating that Holmes, the genial, has grown cynical in his eightieth year, and the writer sees fit to offer Dr. Holmes the suggestion that he should take up his own early writings and thus revert to his original type of thought. In the first place, we beg to doubt the allegation concerning Dr. Holmes' cynicism, unless, perchance, he has been reading some of his own books and then reading some of those "just out"; almost anybody would feel like uttering a caustic word or two under those circumstances. In the second place, the advice to him to read his own books has no sting in it, as it might have to some authors, who began by writing in a cynical vein and repented of it afterward. A characteristic little story about Holmes' early days at the Harvard Medical school has found its way into print lately. Holmes, it is said, was about to give one of his anatomical demonstrations—he had only recently come from the Dartmouth school to take his professorship—and he was surrounded by a small company of his colleagues, most of them of great stature in comparison with him and

he seemed for a moment or two at a loss for words. But finally he said: "Why, gentlemen, do you know that I feel a little strange here? I feel like a small silver coin rattling round among just so many great big coppers." That broke the ice, the constraint was dismissed, and the lecture went smoothly on. Holmes had no fear of giants, as was seen when he measured foils with Hodge and Meigs regarding puerperal fever as an infectious disease. As he himself has said, "I had a savage pleasure, I confess, in handling those two professors—learned men both of them—skilled experts, but babes as it seemed to me in their capacity of reasoning and arguing."—*New York Medical Journal*.

SIR WILLIAM GULL.—The *London World* says:—The fact that the will of the late Sir William Gull has been proved, showing property to the amount of nearly three hundred and fifty thousand pounds, has created much talk during the past week. It is beyond a doubt that for the last few years, since physicians have doubled their fees, and since both branches of the profession are constantly in receipt of very large sums for expeditions by rail, the earnings of members of the healing art have very largely increased. There are possibly a dozen medical men in London who, at their death, will be found to have amassed a hundred thousand pounds; but there is probably not one who has put by anything like the fortune left by Sir William Gull. "Put by" is scarcely the term. Sir William was a very careful, not to say parsimonious, man, his expenses were comparatively small, he entertained very little, his practice was extensive, and from time to time he received from grateful patients, special presents of large amounts. But it was in the dealings with and the investing of those large amounts that the fortune was made, and in this it is understood that Sir William had the advantage of excellent advice.

Bye-the-by, here is a good Gull story, which, though a "chestnut" to some, to the thousands who have never heard it, is worth telling. Sir William's butler was a great character; a small, dark man, always white-chokered, and dressed in black with a calm solemn manner. His income from tips must have been large, as the waiting-room was always crammed, and the order of audience was settled by him.

One day summoned to the street door by a more than ordinary fierce knock, he found an excited individual just alighted from a cab. "Sir William Gull in?" "Yes, sir." "I want to see him." "Have you an appointment, sir?" "Appointment?—no! I'm very ill. I want to see Sir William." "Impossible, sir, without an appointment." (*Naughty word emitted by visitor,*) then: "When can I see him?" "Well, sir," after consulting paper, "At eleven on Tuesday next," "Tuesday next be—! I'm very ill! I tell you I must see someone! Do you know anyone near who could see me?" Servant after cogitation: "Well, sir, there's a gentleman over the way—a very respectable practitioner named Jenner—he might be able to see you!"

AN ITCHING PALM.—Napoleon I., notwithstanding he had vanquished Europe, was three times attacked by the itch, and his physician had much trouble in destroying these acarie armies. The emperor frequently distributed his malady, and one of his victims left the following quotation on the wall of the Tulleries:

The emperor gave me his royal hand,
His mark of esteem for the noble and rich;
He said to-morrow you'll understand,
And the very next day I had the itch.

—D. Renauade.

A CASE FROM PRACTICE.—Semi-Literary Patient (*who is about to receive a hypodermic of morphine*): "Doctor don't give me none of that Exile of Life."