

EDITORIAL

The Editor-in-Chief regrets the unavoidable delay in getting out the April number of this Journal, but owing to a change in the business management it was impossible to mail it sooner. We must also ask our patrons' forbearance in the May number, which will likely be about the middle to the twentieth of the month reaching them, owing to the same cause. Each number beginning with June will come out as usual on the fifth of every month.

THE LABORATORY AS AN AID IN DIAGNOSIS.

While the progress in all lines of science has been truly remarkable in the last quarter of a century, possible none, save that of hygiene and sanitation as a means of prevention of disease, will prove a greater benefaction to mankind than the improved methods of differential diagnosis. No physician of experience can under-estimate the immense advantage of close bed-side observations and mature opinions formulated by practical experience, yet the methods of precision introduced into this field of work in recent years has added much to the scientific acumen of the physicians and should redound greatly to the welfare of those afflicted with disease.

All methods of physical diagnosis have not only been perfected, but in addition the great usefulness of laboratory findings as an aid to correct diagnosis has an advantage which every up-to-date diagnostician should accept and utilize to their fullest extent.

If the general practitioners would avail themselves of these methods of precision coming from chemical laboratories and microscopical findings, few cases of illness would go undiagnosed and few sufferers lose the benefits of modern medicine.

The equipment of the graduates from all first-class medical institutions would be sorely deficient without the preparations necessary to do this work as a regular routine practice, and if the young men entering the profession could be impressed with the necessity of utilizing the practical instructions for chemical purposes given in the modern laboratories of up-to-date schools, the writer is sure that they would not only give to their clientele more satisfactory and scientific work, but would broaden and increase their own intellectual and manipulative skill by constantly proving their diagnosis wherever possible by either the aid of chemical or microscopical tests. This is especially true in the more common diseases such as analysis of the stomach contents, chemical and microscopical urinary findings, as well as the bacteria of sputa and blood, all of which are simple and without much expense can be constantly ready in every doctor's office. The idea that the laboratory is essential to such work is fallacious, as is proven by the practical experience of every up-to-date physician of today. On the other hand, I would not underestimate the value of experience and long bed-side observations, fully realizing that the educational touch and trained eye, together with skill which comes from years of close observations at the bed-side, must always occupy the first place in diagnosis and treatment of disease, but he is blind indeed who can have the aid of these modern laboratory methods and will not avail himself of them, strictly as aids and confirmatory evidences of correct bed-side judgment. The writer would emphatically advise, after years of bed-side work, every young man, or old for that matter, in the practice of medicine to accept every means by which correct conclusions can be formed and proper care of disease be practiced.