

THE VALUE OF THE X-RAY IN SURGERY.

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As the value of the application of the X-ray in surgery and medicine seems to engage the attention of the profession, and a variety of opinions are entertained as to its true character and proper results, I desire in this communication to describe and illustrate certain cases which are both interesting and important. In these actual cases the surgeon's responsibility was serious, and grave consequences would have resulted from errors in diagnosis. The X-ray proved to be the best means of diagnosis in these cases, and with the latest accessories gives us a method for the photography of the invisible which is absolutely reliable and indispensable for securing accurate skiagraphs, entirely eliminating the elements of distortion. Very early in the history of the X-ray, it was found that we had to deal only with the shadow, with all the limitations which the term implies. The disappointments which followed its application in many cases were due to the lack of proper technique, knowledge of the apparatus, and management of each given case. As long as it is borne in mind that we are dealing with a shadow not only treacherous, but which may be easily exaggerated or changed by position, surgeons will always try to have the proper proof that the subject was placed in a certain definite position, and not only one but more skiagraphs will be taken from different points in each case, and the injured part will be compared with the normal one, if the most useful record of our procedure before, during, and after the treatment of our cases is to be secured. All this may be done through the dressings of the injured part, without any pain or discomfort to the patient; through plaster of Paris,