

The Medical Roundup

by *Walter Alvarez*

Emeritus Consultant in Medicine, Mayo Clinic
Emeritus Professor of Medicine, Mayo Foundation

COMMENTS ON DR. CRILE'S ARTICLE AND BOOK

Dr. George Crile Jr., is a man after my own heart. What he writes delights me; it is all so true. It is refreshing. For much of my life, I have been going up and down this land protesting against an unthinking type of the practice of medicine. For instance, just saw an elderly man with good reading-vision in one eye, and a beginning cataract in the other. An ophthalmologist insisted on removing the cataract and the man wanted it done. He and the doctor agreed that if a cataract is abnormal it must immediately be cut out.

But a not a ophthalmologist asked, "Why have the operation when the man is still reading comfortably? Will he read any better with the cataract out?" No. He may even be worse off with the needed big thick lens in front of the eye operated on, the images from the two eyes will be so different in size that the brain will probably be unable to fuse them. It will be like harnessing a donkey with a race horse; the buggy will not go any faster. Would it do any harm to leave the cataract in? The wise ophthalmologist said, "No."

Why, then, did one eye-man operate? I imagine because he did not think. He may be a fine operator, but he may have a push-button type of mind in which the conception 'cataract' causes the idea's 'operation' to pop right out and take over!

Many of us physicians and surgeons, especially when we are overworked, have to fight constantly to avoid this sort of "conditioned reflex" type of practice, with "routine orders" regulating most of our behavior in office and hospital. If we see a person with a cold, we give penicillin, and if we see one with arthritis, we give cortisone. We do not always stop to think that penicillin has no effect on the cold virus, and cortisone is likely to be of value in only one type of arthritis.

Simple Removal Suggested

This is why, recently as I sat at luncheon with Dr. Crile, I was so pleased to hear him say, as he does in his fine article in Life and in his new book, Cancer and Common Sense, that often it would be futile to perform the so-called radical or extreme type of resection for a breast cancer that has scattered. What is the sense in doing a highly technical and costly job of locking the barn door after the horse is stolen? Why not do a simple removal of the breast and then use radiation?

It takes courage for Dr. Crile to write as he does because some of his fellow surgeons, not stop-

ping to think, may say, "There goes a man who is advocating a return to an old and poor type of medicine." No; they will miss his point; what Crile is asking is that we doctors think a bit before we act.

He is asking that we pause to study and ponder over some recent statistics which indicate that some women with a cancer of the breast do better without a radical removal of the breast and the muscles beneath it.

Another thing that Dr. Crile and I object to is the thoughtless and routine use of "complete overhauls." I just saw a man who, for the last two years, has been going insane just as did his mother and his aunt before him. Because several internists in succession had failed to take a good history, such as would have revealed the fact that the man was depressed and suicidal, he was given four futile and, I think, unjustified examinations. The doctors who did this work would have done better to notice immediately his queer behavior, his sad face and his slow speech. Then they should have drawn out the typical story of a man losing his mind. By doing this, they could have saved the man's family a thousand dollars or more.

Complete Examination Worship
As Dr. Crile intimates, for years we doctors have been teaching our students and the public to worship the complete examination. Many of us are coming to regard it as a fetish, which we hope can lead to the cure of anything. Of course, it has its merits, and in most cases one such examination should be made; but still we must always take a good history because in perhaps a third of all cases the diagnosis can be made only from a history. There are no laboratory tests that will show that the woman sitting there on the other side of the desk is dying of a broken heart, or going insane.

Crile is right when he says that often the wise and honest surgeon who tries to come between a patient and some unneeded operation, or some very expensive complete examination which he (or she) thinks he should have, is dismissed and cursed for his supposed lack of interest or knowledge. In medicine it pays financially immensely better to pander to the fears of a hypochondriac than to try to quiet them.

Dr. Alvarez regrets he hasn't the time in which to read or answer requests for information. (Released by The Register and Tribune Syndicate, 1955)

TAXI HARD TO FIND

New York —(U.P.)— Mrs. Sarah Healy ayreed today that it's always hard to find a taxi when you really need one. She gave birth to a daughter on the sidewalk in front of her home early Tuesday while her husband, Andrew, sought in vain for a cab. An ambulance took mother and daughter to a hospital where both are doing well.

Family Missing in Desert Found Safe

San Bernardino, Calif. — (U.P.) — A San Bernardino family of five, missing two days in the barren Mojave Desert, was found yesterday "a little thirsty but otherwise in good condition."

Sheriff's deputies, taking part in a widespread search, said the family of Leroy Evans was located in a car in the general area of Emerson Dry Lake in barren Lucerne Valley.

"Their car was stuck in the sand," the sheriff's office said. "Evans played it safe and stayed right where he was until a search could be organized and he was found."

As We Live

By ELIZABETH HURLOCK, P.H.D.

Older Man Should Prepare In Advance For Parenthood

Many older men go to one extreme or the other when they become fathers. They either become overly-indulgent with the child or over-strict.

(Q) "I am 32 years old. Two years ago I married a man of 58 years who had been a widower for three years. His first marriage was childless, a source of grief to him because he has always adored children and is anxious to have a son and heir. He is a successful businessman and wants a son to carry on his business."

"I am expecting a child in the near future and, of course, my husband is wild with delight. I am afraid he will spoil our child to death. I would like advice from you as to how to handle the problem so our child will grow up to be a joy to us, not a disappointment." Mrs. U.S.T.

(A) You are wise to prepare for the inevitable and be on your guard to keep it from happening. There is no question that your husband is prepared to "spoil" your child, whether it's a boy or a girl.

You will have to take a firm stand and see this does not happen. Start now to read books on child guidance with your husband, putting special emphasis on the sections that deal with overindulgence and discipline. Try to convince him that a child who has kind but firm discipline is happier and makes better adjustments to life than one whose every whim is indulged and who never is forced to toe the mark. Work out together some general policies to follow in bringing up the child. Then see that your husband adheres to these policies, even when he is tempted to be lenient with the "little darling." Since he is a successful businessman, see to it that he doesn't shower the child with material possessions.

Most important of all, if you have a boy, make sure your husband does not try to force the child to go into his business, unless the child wishes to do so. (COPYRIGHT 1955, GENERAL FEATURES CORP.)

Dead line Sunday Classified at noon Saturday 10 am Monday for Monday; other days 5:30 previous day

Three Television Quiz Show Contestants Win Aggregate \$56,000; Big Night Coming

New York — (U.P.) — A seed salesman, a girl psychologist and a coal miner tapped the till for \$56,000 on "The \$64,000 Question" last night to set the stage for what could be the biggest giveaway night in TV history.

The trio will be given the chance next Tuesday of doubling their winnings or bowing out. Their potential total earnings could reach \$112,000, by far the largest sum ever offered on a single program.

The anchor man last night was Steven Frohlich, a seed salesman from Princeton, N.J., who ran his stake to \$32,000 in the category American History. Frohlich, a naturalized American from Czechoslovakia, answered a seven-part poser dealing with constitutional amendments.

The second biggest winner, Joyce Brothers of New York, ran her string to \$16,000 by answering a boxing query.

Stanley Skeens, a miner from Danville, Va., moved to the \$8000 level. Skeens, a Bible expert, earned his pay by reciting three verses of the First Psalm of David.

Fourth Appearance
Frohlich, making his fourth appearance on the CBS quiz show, was asked to give the subject matter and the years of the 16th through 22nd amendments. He correctly answered: The 16th, income tax, 1913; the 17th, popular election of senators, 1913; the 18th, prohibition, 1919; the 19th, women's vote, 1921; the 20th, shift of the presidential inauguration date, 1933; the 21st, repeal of prohibition, 1933; and the 22nd; limiting a President to two terms, 1951.

Frohlich gratuitously supplied the names of each President under which the amendments were passed.

Mrs. Brothers, a trim blonde who weighs 101 pounds, proved she was no flyweight when she correctly punched her way

Wednesday, November 23, 1955

MEDFORD (OREGON) MAIL TRIBUNE—SEVEN

Steel Industry To Boost Ingot Output

New York —(U.P.)— The steel industry in the next four years will boost ingot capacity by about 16,000,000 tons in an expansion drive spurred by the current "worst steel shortage since Korea," Iron Age said today.

The metalworking industry publication said the expansion's price tag will run over \$3,000,000,000.

For the present, steel consumers can look forward to "nothing but woe . . . well into 1956," Iron Age declared, adding that there's "no chance of relief until the third quarter, if then."

Iron Age also said higher steel prices are in the making. It said "at least part of the expansion costs" will be met by higher prices, and reported increasing stress by industry leaders on the need for price hikes.

Walsh Named Head Of Hatfield Campaign

Salem—(U.P.)—A former state senator from Coos Bay has been named head of State Sen. Mark Hatfield's campaign for Republican nomination for Oregon secretary of state.

Named chairman was William E. Walsh, now a Coos Bay attorney and a member of the State Board of Higher Education.

Stewart H. Compton, Salem, was selected treasurer of Hatfield's campaign committee.

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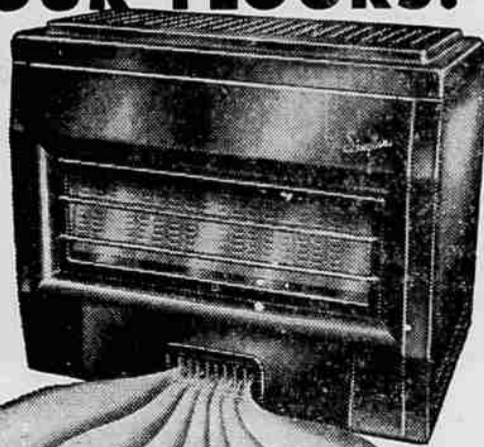
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