The Medical Roundup

by Walter Alvarez

Emeritus Consultant in Medicine Mayo Clinic
Emeritus Professor of Medicine Mayo Clinic
(Register and Tribune Syndicate, 1962)

Person Who Cannot Take Thyroid Substance

Hundreds of people write to say that their doctors got a report from the laboratory that either their basal metabolic rate, measured by a special breathing apparatus, or their "protein-bound iodine," measured by a chemist, was low. Sometimes, the person writes to say that his metabolic rate was minus 12 per cent, and he is being treated for this. I think most experts would agree that 12 per cent is well within limits of normal and needs no treatment. I have known doctor friends who had a basal metabolic rate of minus 20, and who were perfectly comfortable and not ill.

Alvarez

The important point, that few of us doctors seem ever to have been taught in college, is that if we give 2 or 3 grains of thyroid substance to a person, and all he does is to get jittery and nervous and ready to jump out of his skin, he fairly obviously does not need the stuff. Hence, if I had ordered it, I would tell the patient to quit taking it.

If a woman past 40 has become slowed up mentally; if she goes to sleep in her chair; if she has gotten stout and pudgy in the face, with thickened eyelids; if she feels cold; if her skin is dry; if her hair is brittle and if she has lost all interest in sex, then the giving of thyroid substance in good-sized doses is likely to make her feel like a new woman. She probably will have to keep taking it all her days.

Felt More Nervous

Some women write to say that they had a goiter cut out; and then they were given thyroid substance. The fact that this only made them feel more nervous makes me doubt if the report obtained with the breathing machine was correct. We physicians commonly forget that the girl who runs the machine can make a mistake, or her machine can be out of order, or the calculations she has to make can come out wrong.

Before the measuring machines were redesigned, I saw many estimations of basal metabolic rate which proved to have been incorrect. Today, it is fashionable to rely on measurements of the "protein-bound iodine," but this can easily be wrong because the normal amount is about 4-thousandths of a milligram, which is such an extremely tiny amount that only an expert chemist can measure it.

As I write this, a friend comes in to tell me that her "basal metabolic rate" came out much too low, while her protein-bound iodine came out too high. The probability is that one of the reports is wrong.

A point that all women who have had a toxic goiter removed surgically should remember is that they are likely to be somewhat nervous for the rest of their days.

People write to ask if there is any home test for thyroid deficiency and I say "Yes." If a woman (it is usually a woman) feels slowed-up, sleepy, cold, tired or weak; if she doesn't perspire much, and if she goes to sleep in her chair, her thyroid is probably functioning poorly. Her doctor might do well to try giving her a few grains of thyroid substance a day. On the other hand, if her thyroid gland is over-working, she will feel warm, jittery, nervous and unable to sleep. She will perspire much; she will kick off her bed clothes at night; she probably will blink her eyes often; she may have a fine tremor in her hands; she may lose weight, and she may have some diarrhea.

I usually can make the diagnosis in a moment simply by reaching out and feeling the woman's hand. If her skin is warm and feverish, her thyroid gland usually is working too fast. Sometimes, then, one will find a little goiter, and perhaps slightly bulging eyes.

HOMES LACK BATH

London—(UPI)—Nearly 5 million homes in Great Britain still are without a bath, Frank Allaun, a Labor member of Parliament claimed Monday.

Equalization Board Meets

The Jackson County Board of Equalization held its first official meeting of the year Monday to consider the assessor's proposed posted ratio.

County assessment ratios for 1962 were posted April 15. By law, all counties, except those under reappraisal and Multnomah county are required to assess property on the basis of at least 25 per cent of market value. The 25 per cent of market value gives the assessed valuation on which taxes are figured.

Now is the time for taxpayers to examine the assessed value of their property to determine the accuracy of the assessment, county officials advised today. If the taxpayer has a reasonable doubt he should contact the assessor first, then if satisfactory agreement is not reached, the taxpayer may appeal to the county board of equalization.

The equalization board will convene May 14, and petitions may be filed prior to that date with the county clerk, but in no event later than May 21. Petitions must be in writing, giving the facts and the grounds upon which the petition is made, and verified by oath of the petitioner or his attorney.

If the taxpayer fails to secure relief from what he considers to be over assessment or inequity, he may then appeal to the newly created tax court in Oregon.

WINNER—Laura May Noble, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. J. E. Noble, Brophy rd., Eagle Point, has placed tenth in the junior division of the Pinto of the Year and Top Ten Award for 1961. She will accept her award in Nome, N. Y. this week end. With her is her pinto, "Senorita Cindy."

Eagle Point Girl, Tenth In National Competition

Eagle Point — Laura May Noble, 15, of Eagle Point has placed tenth in the junior division of the Pinto of the Year and Top Ten award for 1961.

Miss Noble will go to Rome, N.Y. April 28 and 29 for the awards dinner and presentation of trophies honoring the top ten pinto horses and riders in the United States and Canada during 1961.

She is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. J. S. Noble of Brophy rd. Her pinto is named "Senorita Cindy."

Miss Noble has been taking the 4-H horse club project for six years and is a member of the Lake Creek Rancheros horse club. She started breaking and training her pinto for a 4-H project last year.

The girl is the granddaughter of Vern Matthews, Hereford cattle rancher in the Eagle Point area, where she began her first years of riding at the age of six. Today during branding season she drives cattle to and from the range, and is a contestant in the gymkhana events.

In addition to the riding career, she is a sopohomore at Eagle Point High school, belongs to the Pep club, girls athletic association, plays in the school band, and is working on a 4-H beef club project. She attends the Apostolic Faith church.

Linfield Schedules Annual Campus Day

McMinnville — The invitations are out for annual Campus day at Linfield college on April 28. This is the day when high school seniors have the opportunity of seeing what campus life is like at Linfield.

Linfield students have arranged a full day for the visitors. They will be able to meet professors, visit classes, and participate in college activities.

DATE REVISED

Salem — (UPI) — The Oregon Highway Department said Monday that it has revised the proposed completion date for the $24 million Astoria-Megler bridge, extending it from the spring of 1965 to the summer of 1965.

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Small Worlds Around Us

By LYNN M. WATKINS

(Register and Tribune Syndicate 1962)

Plant Monster Sundew Doesn't Look The Part

We were disappointed when we found it. We had expected a vicious monster, a miniature ogre. But we discovered an innocent-looking little rosette of bright, shiny leaves snuggled down close to the soggy ground of the swamp.

We located it by the jewel-like leaves. They shone and sparkled in the sun like tiny diamonds. It was nearly hidden by low-growing grass, but it shone so brightly we could hardly miss it. It was about two inches across and barely an inch in height. This was a sundew, one of the so-called monsters of the world of plants.

It didn't look the part. From the rosette of slender leaves several bristly hairs extended. On the tip end of each was a tiny dot of purple. We adjusted a magnifying glass and established the fact the purple spots were actually small glands. Here was a plant that trapped living flesh, digested it, and thereby extended its own simple life.

Some astonished observers who have studied this plant credit it with a low order of "plant reasoning," or "vegetable intelligence" because it can reject that which is not flesh.

No Nitrogen

The sundew grows in a swampy or marshy environment and in a sour soil almost devoid of nitrogen—an element ordinarily necessary to plant growth. To gain necessary nutriments, it must resort to the securing of flesh—flesh in the form of insects—for its continual survival.

Having located the tiny—and we hoped hungry—plant, we settled down to wait. Carefully we removed the obstructing grass blades, and adjusted a magnifying glass on the little plant. We wanted to see a plant trap eat a living victim.

It didn't take long. A small fly came sailing in to hover over the meat which we had placed near the plant. Before it settled to ground level it aparently noticed the shining jewels of the nearby sundew. The fly left the meat and flew close over the waiting plant.

Settled Down

Evidently the glistening substance that shone so brightly was attractive, for the fly settled down right in the middle of the rosette of slender leaves.

It was alarmed for it tried to fly off again, but its feet were stuck. The more it struggled, the tighter it was held. Its frantic movement excited the plant, which poured out more of the sticky substance. The bristly hairs, with their attached glands bent inward, enfolded the helpless insect like tiny, loving arms.

Time moved slowly now for us as we watched. A chemical action was slowly digesting the fly; the plant had made a kill. That shiny fluid was very similar to the gastric juices in the stomach of a warm-blooded animal . . . a juice powerful enough to digest flesh, turning it into a liqud. The plant ogre was assimilating its meal, and we were eye-witnesses.

Home Rule Forum Scheduled on TV

A county citizens' forum on home rule will be held Thursday, April 26, on station KMED-TV, Channel 10, at 10 p.m.

The program will be conducted live and is designed to provide an additional opportunity for interested citizens to air questions about the proposed Jackson county home rule charter.

An admittance fee will be charged to help pay production costs, it was stated.

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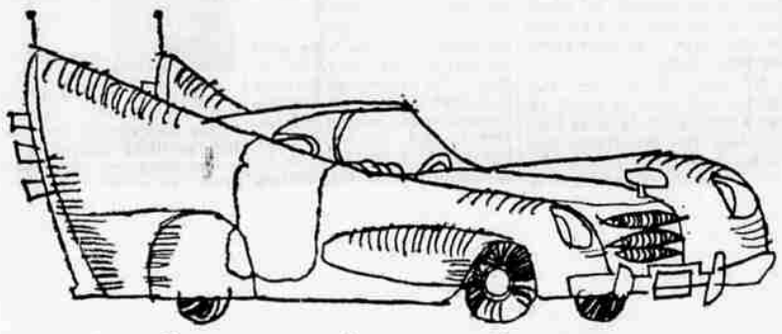
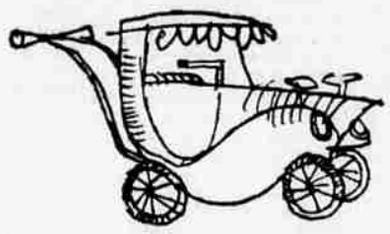


you've seen the overhung ones



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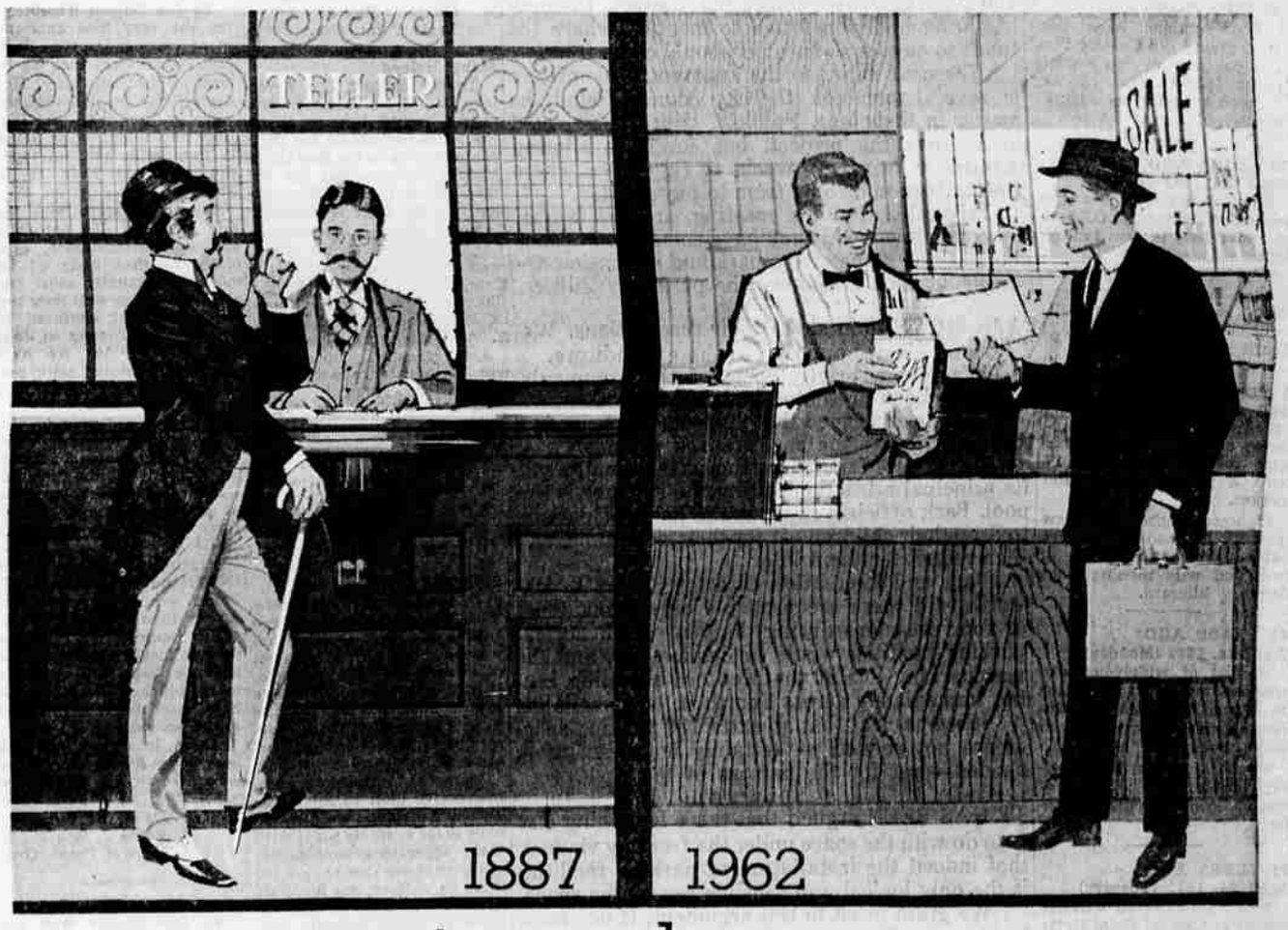

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