Ridgway Collection

5M-7-21

CABLE ADDRESS
ROCKSTITUTE

THE HOSPITAL OF THE ROCKEFELLER INSTITUTE
FOR MEDICAL RESEARCH
66TH STREET AND AVENUE A, NEW YORK.

April 5, 1922.

Dear Sir:-

Through my sister, who is an assistant of Mr. Frank Chapman, your very valuable book on Color Standards and Nomenclature has come into my hands.

For some time I have been looking for a satisfactory method of expressing the color of patients' fingernails, lips or cheeks who have what in medicine is called cyanosis. This, as you no doubt know, is a condition due to oxygen unsaturation of the arterial or capillary blood and is frequently seen in heart failure and in pneumonia. Some quantitative expression of the degree of cyanosis and its disappearance would supply a valuable criterion of the patient's condition when arterial puncture and actual blood gas analysis is not feasible. Recently, I have had a case of lobar pneumonia in which the patient's cheek matched the color called "Brownish Vinaceous" on page 39 of your book, and, after oxygen treatment, with the improved condition the patient's check assumed the color called "Corinthian Pink" on page 27 of your book. This has satisfied me that some color comparing system might be valuable. I had thought of using the tintphotometer now so widely used in industry, but this would be, I fear, somewhat cumbersome and it would be difficult to arrange the part to be read in a proper position.

I should like very much your opinion as how best to arrive at a proper quantitative expression of these skin colors in which natural pigment of the skin as well as the degree of oxygenation of the capillary blood plays a considerable rôle. Do you think that a color wheel in which actual numerical values of colors can be read would be practicable, or do you think that it would be possible to obtain such of the colors from your book as might be encountered in these pathologic conditions separately from the book for the purpose of arranging them in some convenient comparator in which they might be placed directly next to the part to be read?

Knowing how many years of serious thought you have given to the problem of color values and their expression, I thought that I could save myself a great deal of probably wasted labor by getting your opinion first, for which I should be grateful.

Very truly yours,

Carl A. L. Binger

C. A. L. BINGER,
Ass't Resident Physician.

Mr. Robert Ridgway,
Curator of the Division of Birds,
United States National Museum,
Washington, D. C.