

Nose - Improvers.

By L. S. LEWIS.



THOUSANDS of people, it would appear, are dissatisfied with the shape or hue of the nose with which Nature has endowed them. Knowing this, the inventor arose in his might, and invented an "improver"—to improve the most prominent feature into almost any shape you wish, from *nez retroussé* to the nose Hebraic.

The nose machine, cunningly compact, of brass plates and screws, is designed to press the unbeautiful feature into the required shape. It is taped and padded before being sent away, so as to prevent soreness, and a lotion is supplied with it to tone down its too impetuous action. The machine was invented by Professor Lees Ray, of Wavertree, near Liverpool, and is patented in America and France, as well as in the United Kingdom.

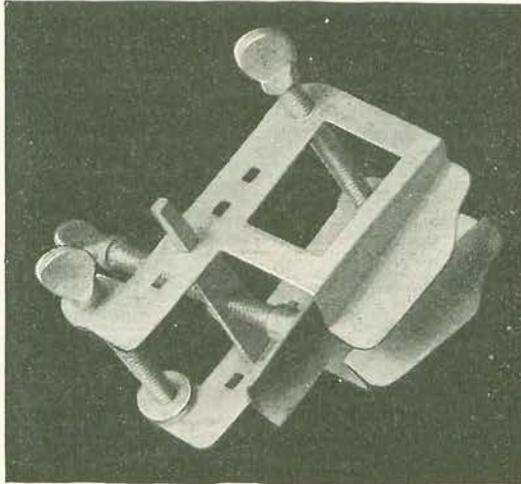
The professor has a big practice. On an average he sells 600 of these ingenious machines every year, and, in addition, treats about 2,500 persons (mainly of a sedentary occupation) cursed with red or fiery noses. Of course, all patients fix their eye on the Perfect Nose as defined by the professor. . . . "It should be of the same length as the forehead, and have a slight depression at its root between the eyes. It should also follow a perfectly straight line, and should come exactly over the centre of the upper lip. Seen in profile, the base should be one-third of the length" and so on.

The nose machines are divided into two classes. Those in Class A have horizontal screws and plates only; but Class B machines have both horizontal and vertical screws, thus exercising a downward, as well as a claspings, pressure on the organ to be improved. The great majority of machines sold belong to Class A. This is because the shape of nose

most altered is the aggressive "pug" or "snub" variety, which it is desired to press laterally into a graceful aquiline. Ladies, I learn, prefer a small straight nose, with, perhaps, a *souffçon* of the *retroussé*; while gentlemen aspire to a nose straight in profile and not too narrow at the bridge or lobes; there are many, however, who prefer a slightly Roman shape.

The machines are scientifically made—there are blades which act as cheek rests, and curves which leave the nostrils free for breathing. Made to measure, a nose improver costs a guinea; but the prices range

from 9s. 6d. to 2½ guineas, according to requirements. The literature issued by the professor is vastly entertaining, particularly to those who hunger not after the Perfect Nose. We are told that the "claspings" improvers are intended for noses: (1) flat, wide, broad, thick; (2) turned-up, pug, snub, dumpy; (3) crooked, bent, one-sided; and (4) round, bottled, fat, and swelled. Class B machines are fashioned to subdue

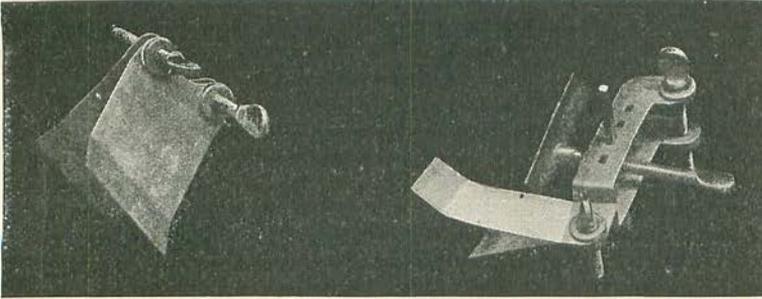


MACHINE FOR REDUCING A TOO PROMINENT NOSE.

(1) prominent and (2) curved noses. It is, of course, impossible for these things to actually enlarge or diminish one's nose, but they do exercise such diplomatic pressure that it would be a very Sultan among probosces which would not reform in the necessary direction. Patients living in foreign countries, and others at a distance, assist in getting suitable treatment by sending photographs and sketches (some would upset the gravity of a Patriarch), measurements, wax models, and explanatory descriptions covering reams of foolscap.

According to the directions issued with the nose improvers, "a pressure too heavy will only lead to discomfort, and possibly leave a temporary mark for some hours after wear."

In the case of turned-up noses, you are told: "Depress the end of the nose with the finger to the required extent *before* finally



CLASPING PRESSURE ONLY.—FOR
“BRINGING OUT” FLAT NOSES.

DOWNWARD AS WELL AS CLASPING PRESSURE.—
FOR DEPRESSING TIP-TILTED NOSES.

tightening up the screws, so that the instrument will keep it depressed during wear.

“The times of wearing the instrument should be as regular as possible. The best plan is to adjust it in position on going to bed at night and remove it in the morning. An hour or two during the day, if it can be managed, will, of course, be of assistance.

“It is necessary to warn patients not to be *too hasty* in the use of the instrument. A steady, firm, continuous slight pressure will be much more productive of beneficial results than any amount of, so to speak, spasmodic jerkings. Slow and sure in this, as in all other things, is the high road to success.”

Class B directions merely contain, in addition to the above, some instructions as to the use of the vertical screw controlling the segmental piece which represses the too aspiring, tip-tilted nose. It is also stated in the directions issued that “the method of wearing the instrument will no doubt be at once perceived from its appearance”; and one would really think so. Yet the professor receives scores of letters from puzzled patients (chiefly ladies), who are under the impression that the improver has to be placed *inside* the nose. “I feel sure I can’t manage it,” wrote one lady, plaintively; and when you consider that the instrument measures about 6in. by 3in., you will realize the force of the remark.

There is practically no end to the vagaries of the specialist’s patients. One wanted to know whether an elastic band round his head and face wouldn’t reduce his too prominent nose as well as any machine. Another had read in an American comic paper

that an ordinary wooden clothes-peg was a fine thing for “bringing up” a small, receding nose. This young man actually tried this, with the result that his unfortunate organ *was* “brought up”—it swelled to twice its normal size, necessitating careful treatment for months.

There need not be the slightest question about the *bona-fides* of these cases, the whole of the confidential correspondence having been placed entirely at my disposal. If portions of these letters are here quoted, it is not with the idea of casting ridicule upon the writers, but rather as matter of interest to the million.

To proceed. Many potential patients don’t like the sound of the word “machine” or “instrument.” “Some people,” writes the professor to me, “get visions of *steam machinery* and doctors’ knives, and an appropriate name has yet to be devised for the improvers.”

In the specialist’s pamphlets, patients are strongly advised to assist the “influence” of the machines in various ways. “Continually pass your fingers and thumb over your nose—not too roughly, but coaxingly (*sic!*), so as to press it towards the desired shape.” . . . “Do not wear tight clothing, especially collars.” Furthermore, you must give up rich pastry and highly seasoned dishes, as well as rich drinks like brandy and port, and you must never eat quickly.”

Astonishing as it may seem, people in every walk of life are at this moment wearing nose machines, though, of course, the vast majority of us have never before heard tell of the things. The distinguished signatures of many of the nose doctor’s patients would amaze you. There are peers galore, bishops too, and clerics beyond number. But so astonishing are the records that I cannot do better than jot down here a few rough notes about remarkable cases



NOSE-IMPROVER TAPED READY
FOR WEAR.

which the professor was kind enough to send me :—

"1. Young man wanted to know whether I could twist his nose all out of shape, in accordance with the most approved traditions of the ring. He loved to be thought a 'bruiser,' and fancied that a twisted nose would lend colour to his lying yarns about the terrific battles he had fought at the National Sporting Club. There are many similar applications for the purpose of disguise; but here is the most extraordinary among this class of cases.

"2. Middle-aged man wanted his nose put awry, so as to induce the girl to whom he was engaged to give him up. He had gone elsewhere on prolonged business, and had got engaged to another girl. The nasal *status quo ante* could, he thought, be subsequently restored by the machine.

"3. A father of a family once asked if I could make the noses of his children all similar to his own. He himself had a fairly good nose, but his wife's was rather 'pug,' and all the children's noses resembled hers, much to the annoyance of pater-familias. He had then four children, and wanted me not only to attend to theirs, but actually promised to let me have any future children at once, so that I could 'train up their noses in the way they should go' from the beginning!

"4. An anxious young lady with a short nose desired a longer one. She suggested having a machine to clasp her nose, and then attach to this a string with a swinging weight. This illustrates the curious conceptions people have of the nose improvers before actually receiving one.

"5. Distinguished actress once suggested to me that if she wore various makes of the machine, she could alter her nose to fit every *rôle* she played. This, she argued, would obviate, and be much better than, 'making-up.' Surely this surpasses all previous attempts of latter-day players to 'look the part.'

"6. I have many applications from Army men who yearn for a 'Wellington nose.'

"7. Elderly lady understood that the treatment consisted in 'the scientific filing and grinding away of large noses.' Hers was

large; was the operation painful, and would it all be done at once? Ladies, by the way, continually misunderstand the directions, and wear the instruments in strange and fearful positions. Then they complain. 'I have worn the machine now for five weeks,' wrote one irate dame, 'and all the thing has done is to bodge dents all over my nose.' She omitted to say she had worn 'the thing' upside down."

The testimonials as to efficacy, however, are almost innumerable. Also they are funny beyond everything, ranging from the polished, "third person" diction of the peer, right down to the hilarious screed of the suburban mechanic, who, under the elegant pseudonym, "Boko," rejoices that "I have now got shut of my tiresome nose."

Here is one extract from the professor's correspondence: "I am greatly touched (*sic*) by the improvement in my hitherto bottle-shaped nose." One gentleman writes strangely: "I want something with a depressing effect"; and another declares rhapsodically, "the Mashin is perfek."

Many people who have actually altered the former shape of their nose by means of the machines presently get dissatisfied again, and hanker—such is the effect of the fatal facility with which the change is wrought—after yet another shape. The professor has taken for us two

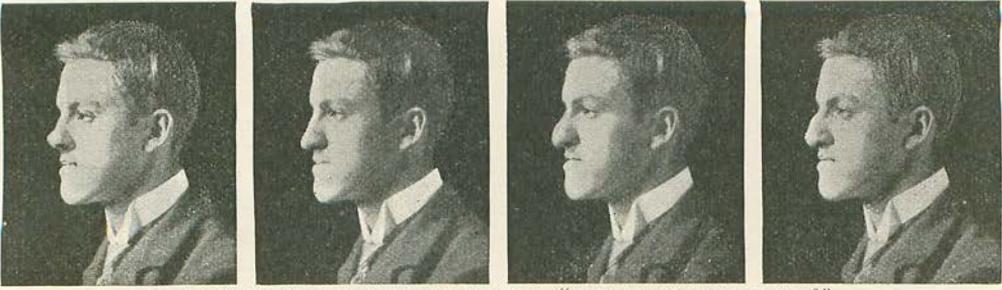


METHOD OF WEARING THE NOSE MACHINE.

sets of photos.—one of a young man and the other of a prepossessing girl—who each tried four changes of nose before resting content.

The much-abused organ itself being wonderfully accommodating, there is no finality in this matter; so that there might actually be a fashion in noses just as there is in, say, the mode of dressing the hair.

Now, when we come to consider the "red nose" cases, we enter an even more interesting field of serio-comic fact. "A red nose," says the professor's pamphlet, portentously, "is a relentless scourge and a most insidious foe." It is, it is. Also it is something of a butt, hence the thousands of applications annually from sufferers. It is a curious fact, by the way, that in nine cases out of ten treatment is wanted "for a friend." Our professor has an eloquent pen when he writes on this subject. He paints in appro-



AN EXPERIMENT WITH THE NOSE MACHINES.—"WHICH SHAPE SUITS ME BEST?"

privately lurid colours the agonies endured by the innocent, clean-living young man, whose digestive organs have rebelled and hung out a noticeable danger signal on that young man's sorrowful face. The social torments! The dread of winter!! And—above all—the serious assumption on the part of HER people that George has taken to drink!!!

A whole volume—a vastly entertaining volume—might be written about the specialist's red-nosed patients. And the glimpses into poor human nature afforded by the records! The professor himself has produced many *obiter dicta* on the subject, out of the fulness of his experience. Says he, reflectively, "Coming into possession (*sic*) of a red nose makes an entire change in one's life." And here I am reminded of a very peculiar case. An actor in a stock company complained to the specialist of a confirmed red nose. The leading man considerably allocated to him all "drunken reprobate" parts in melodrama, so that his lurid proboscis was rather an acquisition than otherwise on the stage. "At the same time," the poor fellow explained, "it's quite certain I can't pass the whole of my life on the stage." By the way, many members of the theatrical profession suffer from red noses, caused entirely by the action of grease paint and "make-up."

A fairly eminent divine wrote severely about his incipient red nose. "My congre-

gation are just beginning to notice it, and I am conscious of subdued skitting and giggling (mainly from the young) while I am in the pulpit."

"I am suffering," explained a young man, pathetically, "from what is called an *indigestible* red nose" (the italics are the young man's own). "Nevertheless my employer has discharged me, saying that he has had much previous experience of tipping clerks. He also says he won't have even the sign of beer on his premises."

The specialist assures me that he is occasionally made the medium of cruel practical jokes. Red nose lotions and treatment are ordered (anonymously) to be sent to persons who never dreamt of ordering such things. University undergrads seem very fond of this kind of sport. In these cases the professor invariably sends the letter order to the aggrieved and indignant party. It is only men like the "red nose doctor" who realize to the full the incredible vanity of mankind—and womankind.

"A girl of eighteen once ordered two red nose treatments, one for herself and one for her grandmother, aged seventy-three. I returned the fee for the grandmother's case with some suitable advice, but received, a few days later, an indignant reply from the old lady herself, insisting on having the treatment, and incidentally asking if I had a cure for *wrinkles!*"



PORTRAITS OF A LADY WHO CULTIVATED A DIFFERENT NOSE FOR EACH ADMIRER.