

Formations called *calculi* are apt to form in the kidneys, and in their passage to the bladder to cause great pain. There are many varieties of these calculi which, when they do not take the form of solid substances, are called gravel. A calculus sometimes occasions a very serious surgical operation, which I have spoken of, as I have also of some of the commoner methods of testing urine, which it will be useful for you to know.

Urine, as I told you, is a separation from the blood. The urea is removed from the blood by the kidneys; but if this separation does not take place, it accumulates in the blood, circulates with it to every part of the body, and acts as a poison, especially upon the brain.

Suppression of urine is, like nephritis, generally a symptom of some disease; but it is a condition which requires very active treatment, for if it be not soon relieved, coma comes on, and death will follow shortly.

Cupping on the loins, the hot bath, medicine to promote the action of the skin, which has, as I explained to you, a great deal to do with the kidneys, are some of the usual remedies, and large warm enemata are often useful.

It is important that Nurses should not confound the terms *suppression* of urine and *retention* of urine. In suppression the secretion is suspended, which is a case coming under the care of a physician. Retention may occur from various causes requiring surgical aid. Sometimes after operations a difficulty may be experienced in emptying the bladder, and the Nurse should lose no time in calling the Surgeon's attention to this.

Sometimes the secretion from the kidneys is largely increased, and this condition is almost as dangerous as the suppression I have spoken of before.

This excessive quantity of urine is one of the distinguishing features of a disease you will often hear spoken of, *diabetes*, which is also accompanied by a singular change in the quality of the urine; it becomes loaded with sugar. A healthy person passes from two to three pints of urine in the twenty-four hours; but patients in diabetes have been known to pass forty pints in the same time, and even more than this. It will be the Nurse's duty, besides of course preserving a specimen of the urine for inspection, to measure it carefully for the physician's information.

Diabetes produces a gradual wasting away, and is a most painful disease to witness. Dryness of skin, and constant and distressing thirst, are accompaniments of it; and it is often very terrible to the Nurse to restrain her patient's craving for the liquids which increase the malady. Great attention to the diet, from which sugar should be wholly excluded, is of benefit in such cases.

Another complaint of the kidneys is known as *Bright's disease*, which is accompanied by the presence of albumen in the urine, which very often leads, though not always, to *anarsarca*, or dropsy.

Dropsy from heart disease is first seen at the ankles; from liver, in the abdomen; from kidneys, in the loose tissues of the lower eyelids. Sometimes dropsy comes from disease of the heart; but whatever may be the causes, it is a most distressing condition for the patient, and requires the utmost attention on the part of the Nurse. The patient, when the dropsy appears in the abdomen, is restless and uncomfortable in almost every position, the feeling of distention amounting often to agony. Some relief is afforded occasionally by very gentle friction with the hand.

Of the operation which is sometimes performed for the relief of dropsy, *paracentesis* or *tapping*, as it is called, I have spoken in another place.

(To be continued.)

PRIZE ESSAY COMPETITION.—X.

THE BEST SUGGESTIONS
FOR
THE FORMATION AND EFFICIENT WORKING
OF A
RESIDENTIAL CLUB FOR NURSES.

BY MISS EMILY IRWIN KNIGHT
(Late of Westminster Hospital, Broad Sanctuary,
London).

ONLY those who are not blessed with homes of their own, near their work, know how restful that sounds; for it is only those who know the weariness of coming back from work, tired out in body and mind, and finding no loving hands held out to bid them welcome home again.

But will a Club supply that want? Yes, I venture to say that in a great measure it would—the ideal Club that I will try to describe. The most important thing for "Our Club" would be the position; it would need to be very central, or neither Doctor or Nurse would find their way inside its walls.

We will suppose a suitable site chosen—somewhere near Oxford Circus would be very convenient for many. The house, or houses, would need to be in three semi-separate divisions—one side for Monthly Nurses, the other side for Infectious Fever Nurses, the centre being reserved for those who are Medical or Surgical Nurses. The necessity for this is obvious, as no Doctor would take a Monthly Nurse from the apartments a Fever

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)