

ends and squeezed with strong forceps. The uninterrupted, or glover's, suture, is often used in incised wounds of the bowels and in plastic operations on the eyeballs. Then there is the "figure-of-eight" suture with pins, for harelip, etc., the quilled suture, and button suture, which have their special uses. A very useful method of closing a widely gaping but shallow incision is lacing by means of strips of adhesive plaster, in the ends of which are worked eyelet holes. With this appliance no stitches need be taken. The pieces of adhesive plaster are adjusted at right angles to the incision, their ends approaching to within half an inch of the edges of the wound. An aseptic cord is then laced into the eyelet holes and the edges of the incision brought together. This method of closing a wound is most useful in operations on the face, when it is desired to make the smallest possible scar.

Complete immobility of the injured part must be secured, and the wound protected from all injury from without. Ordinary incised wounds that have been dressed with due regard to asepsis and antisepsis need not be disturbed for a week or more, or until primary adhesion is secured.

Medical Matters.

COMPRESSED AIR ILLNESS.



A RECENT article on this affection has attracted considerable attention. It has been well known for a long time that workmen who are compelled to labour in an atmosphere which for any reason is forcibly compressed suffer from certain peculiar symptoms. These have hitherto been described under the term of Caisson Disease, which, however, is inaccurate and misleading, seeing that a caisson may not be charged with compressed air at all, and that at the present time compressed air is used in other work than that for which caissons are employed. The article in question is founded upon observations made during the construction of the recent Blackwall Tunnel under the Thames. The average pressure of the air employed was about 25 lb. to the square inch. It is stated never to have been greater than 27 lb. to the inch. The number of men working together in the com-

pressed atmosphere varied from thirty to eighty; each of them was eight hours at work with a rest of three-quarters of an hour at the middle of that time, during which they took their dinner under ordinary atmospheric pressure. Various valuable precautions were taken to diminish, as far as possible, the ill effects of the work, but despite this over 200 cases occurred during the construction of the tunnel in which the special symptoms were observed. The chief trouble complained of was severe pain in various parts of the body, especially in the legs. In a number of cases there was paralysis in various forms, and these cases were very serious when accompanied by bladder troubles. Giddiness due to some auditory disturbance was not infrequently found, but apparently was not regarded as serious. The opinion of the author of the article, which is evidently supported by physiology and common sense, is that much of the illness which occurred was due, not so much to the increased pressure of the atmosphere, but to the great contamination of the confined air caused by the large number of workmen, and, therefore, to a form of poisoning by carbonic acid.

POISONING BY ARSENIC.

AN important article upon this subject has recently been published by a French physician. He lays stress on the great difficulty of determining precisely the fatal dose of arsenious acid. This is a matter which of course can only be proved by investigation, and it is found that in the various animals experimented upon there is a great difference in this respect, not only among different species, but also amongst individual animals of the same species. Rabbits, however, are much more easily poisoned by arsenic than guinea-pigs, or than any other domesticated creatures, and they seem to show quite an idiosyncrasy in the rapid effect produced on them by very small doses of the drug.

A NOVEL VAPOUR BATH.

A FRENCH physician has just recommended an ingenious method of giving a vapour bath without removing the patient from bed. A stout blanket is placed under the patient, who keeps on his nightgown; under each foot, and at each side of the body, a stone bottle containing boiling water is placed, each being wrapped in a wet towel and covered with

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