

OUR PRIZE COMPETITION.

WHAT IS AN ANEURISM? HOW SHOULD A PATIENT SUFFERING FROM ONE BE TREATED?

We have pleasure in awarding the first prize in the new year to Miss Emily Marshall, 123, New Bond Street, London, W., for her article on the above question, as follows:

An aneurism is a tumour of an artery due to its local dilatation, usually with rupture of the internal and middle coats.

Inside the blood vessels, of course, there is always a great pressure of blood caused every moment by the beating of the heart, which pumps the blood over the whole body. The pressure is great, and the blood vessels are so elastic that they can bear this pressure without giving way, dilating when more blood rushes through, as is occasioned by any exertion, and contracting when there is less blood.

An artery never ruptures, no matter how furiously the heart is beating, so long as it retains its elasticity. In old age there is always a tendency for the arteries and veins to become hardened and less elastic, and when this happens they are unable to cope with the sudden alteration of pressure. The weakening of arteries can and does occur in youth owing to certain diseases, such as syphilis, gout and alcoholism. These diseases may affect the whole of the arteries of the body, or a very few or perhaps one. It is called "Atheroma." People with "atheromatous arteries" are liable to aneurism, especially those who are subjected to physical strain or manual labour. The aneurism or blood tumour gives way under the increased pressure of blood by exertion, owing to the weakened inner wall. Its presence occasionally exists quite unsuspected; but as a rule it is diagnosed by the unusual pulsation over the part, and there is generally pain. In some cases pain is very severe, and people get agonising attacks, more especially in aneurism of the aorta. The pain is caused more or less by pressure upon the other organs and defective circulation. Sudden death is frequent in these cases.

The signs and symptoms of an aneurism depend greatly upon its position; it may be in the chest, lungs, abdomen, brain, or anywhere else. Nature assists a cure by allowing the blood to coagulate, and so a coating is formed over the rupture. But suitable medical and nursing treatment must be obtained, and every endeavour is needed to help to bring about coagulation.

Absolute rest with light, spare diet, freedom from worry and excitement are at all times

necessary to aid treatment. The nurse may be called upon to apply compression by the fingers. A child under my care, whose leg was encased in plaster of Paris after operation for talipes, suddenly was seized with acute pain. The plaster casing was removed, and a swelling in the position of the posterior tibial artery, with some pulsation, was noticed. Some hours later this suddenly burst. I applied compression and raised the leg until the surgeon operated. The operation proved most successful. For cases which cannot be treated by operation, I believe the latest treatment is a preparation of iodine injected.

Traumatic aneurism is not uncommon.

HONOURABLE MENTION.

The following competitors receive honourable mention: Miss L. M. Evans (Cardiff), Miss E. Dobson (Birmingham), Miss Carmichael (Leicester).

Miss Evans classifies aneurisms according to their shape, as fusiform, sacculated, or dissecting. The thoracic aorta is, she says, the most common seat of aneurisms. In the case of "dissecting" aneurisms, the coats of the artery are torn, and the blood current forces its way between them.

QUESTION FOR NEXT WEEK.

How should male nurses be trained to fit them for their duties?

PRIZES FOR NURSES.

Time passes so quickly that the Annual Nursing and Midwifery Conference and Exhibition, to be held from April 23rd to the 26th inclusive, at the Royal Horticultural Hall, Westminster, will soon be here.

The BRITISH JOURNAL OF NURSING will again have a Stand—No. 11b—at the Exhibition, and, in response to the invitation of the managers, the Editor has consented to organize a Section, which will take the form of a Practical Nursing Exhibit. In connection with this the managers have most generously offered the following Prizes, to enable the winners to attend the forthcoming International Congress of Nurses at Cologne, by defraying their expenses in whole or in part.

PRIZES.

First Prize	...	...	£7	7	0
Second Prize	...	...	£4	4	0
Third Prize	...	...	£2	2	0

The Editor invites the Leagues of Nurses and others to compete for these Prizes, and will at an early date, notify the scope of the Exhibit.

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