

mixture. Such may have combined curative and recuperative functions. Digitalis, a cardiac tonic, and sodium salicylate may be taken as examples of the specific drug; iron and arsenic, and mixtures such as phosphates of iron, lime, and soda being examples of the tonic variety. Those enter the blood-stream in small doses, and gradually, by replenishing the blood constituents and tissue material, strengthen and tone up the system. Some drugs have an accumulative effect, and their action should be watched, as poisoning may result after a time. Stimulants are readily absorbed by the blood through the stomach walls. Fats, such as cod liver oil, after being emulsified by the bile and pancreatic juice, are absorbed into the blood-stream from the thoracic duct, which is fed by the lacteals of the small intestine. A great many medicines in tonic form are given to promote digestion and to relieve acidity and heartburn. These act primarily on the juices of the stomach, and are absorbed along with the foodstuffs. Aperient medicines are of large variety, and are introduced mainly by mouth in the form of pills, powders and draughts. They act upon the intestines and as a corrective to the excretory organs of the body. Calomel and salines are examples. Pills have the disadvantage of hardening if kept for any length of time, and may thus pass through the intestinal tract without becoming dissolved. Suppositories, solid preparations consisting of oil of theobroma containing the required drug, such as morphia, are introduced into the rectum, where they are easily dissolved and the contents absorbed through the walls of the intestines. Enemas such as starch and opium may be given to relieve pain, others to check disease, and are likewise absorbed through the intestinal walls.

Medicines introduced by rubbing, such as mercurial ointments, are absorbed through the pores of the skin to the orifices of the glands, and thence to the circulation. Mercurial vapour and sulphur baths act in the same way through open pores of the skin.

The administration of medicine forms a separate subject, but anyone responsible for introducing medicine into the circulation should have a knowledge of the action of the drugs in use and the symptoms of an overdose. The times for giving drugs are important, such as before or after food, and also the frequency. The abbreviated terms in use in regard to this should be accurately known.

Five well-known rules are worth remembering in regard to the introduction of medicine into the circulation: To be punctual; to read directions; shake the bottle; use measure-

glass; never give a double dose if one before has been forgotten.

HONOURABLE MENTION.

The following competitors receive honourable mention:—

Miss G. E. Hinchcliffe, Miss G. Tatham, Miss M. Stevens, Miss M. M. G. Bielby, Miss A. Francis, Miss E. M. Streeter, Miss A. McCabe, Miss F. Morris, Miss V. Fisher, Miss C. McDonald.

Miss Bielby writes:—There are several methods of administering medicines, and with all, the results are to some extent dependent on certain common factors which should ever be borne in mind. Perhaps the most important of these is the patient's degree of hope concerning the efficacy of the medicine, and here the soil may be prepared for the drug by the timely use of suggestion, and the more especially in all nervous disorders. If the medicine is to do its work there must be no mental resistance on the part of the patient, and the greater the confidence the more effective the remedy. Physical discomfort or repugnance inevitably act as a deterrent, therefore the utmost thoughtfulness, refinement and skill should be brought to the administration of medicines. Introspection is also a deterrent, and the patient should be weaned by other interests from any tendency to dwell on a dose after it has been given.

Some people are extremely sensitive to the action of all medicines; others have an idiosyncrasy against certain drugs, so the effect of medicines should be minutely observed. . . .

Many disagreeable solutions can be disguised in a suitable vehicle, as orange wine or lemon juice for oil. . . . Pills should be placed in a piece of jelly and followed by a large draught of water. . . . Powders may be inserted in a date. . . .

Medicine can be administered through the skin in three ways: (a) when the medicinal agent is absorbed by the skin from simple contact; (b) when friction is used to hasten absorption; (c) when a blister is raised and the medicament applied to the raw surface. . . . The epidermic method is often used in administering unguentum hydrarg. The skin should be first washed with warm water. To avoid personal contact with the ointment it may be applied by a long perfume phial filled with warm water. . . .

Many valuable medicines are supplied by plants. Spinach is rich in iron, onions contain sulphur, and are the finest nervine known; lettuce, with its opium, is a sedative; green figs are an excellent laxative; and lemon juice is a cure for common colds.

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