

writer has no experience, but would refer the reader to Captain Pinch's report of the Radium Institute (*British Medical Journal*, January 25, 1913). It is generally agreed, however, that cases of the œsophagus and rectum give poor results, although sometimes giving a little temporary relief. Gynæcological cases, however, are more satisfactory to deal with in this manner.

I am indebted to Captain Pinch, F.R.C.S., Director of the Radium Institute in London, for his kind assistance and advice from time to time, also to the Radium Institute in Paris, and to Sir Malcolm Morris, who is one of the earliest pioneers of radium treatment in this country.

### OUR PRIZE COMPETITION.

DESCRIBE THE USUAL TYPES OF WORMS WHICH INFEST THE INTESTINAL TRACT. WHAT SYMPTOMS DO THEY PRODUCE?

We have pleasure in awarding the prize this week to Miss Kathleen Dinsley, Herne Hill.

#### PRIZE PAPER.

There are many varieties of worms which are liable to infest the alimentary tract. The commonest forms, however, are:—

- (i) *Tænia*, or tapeworm.
- (ii) *Ascaris lumbricoides*, or round worm.
- (iii) *Ascaris vermicularis*, or thread worm.

The TAPEWORM is usually introduced into the body with meat, especially insufficiently cooked pork. The worm gives rise to intestinal derangement and diarrhœa, but produces no very special symptom, and can only be detected by the presence of segments in the stools. Segments or joints of white, flat, tape-like appearance of about half an inch in length and a quarter of an inch across, are sometimes voided with the motions. These are portions of the tapeworm, which is many feet in length when complete. The segments are broader at the centre, and become smaller and finer as they approach the head, which is globular in form, and of the size of a pin's head, so that unless great care is taken it may easily escape detection. It is very important to search the motions to discover the head: unless this is passed the worm simply develops again.

Many drugs are given with the object of killing the worm, or to favour its detachment from the wall of the bowel; of these the most commonly used is the extract of male fern (*felix mas*). The selected drug must be given fasting in the early morning, the bowels having been freely emptied by a large dose of castor oil, or other aperient administered on the previous evening. The bowels must be emptied again

after the drug has been taken, otherwise the worm, which has become separated, but perhaps not killed, may fasten on again.

(ii) ROUND WORMS.—These long worms resemble in shape and appearance an earth worm, only they are white or yellowish-white, instead of red in colour. They inhabit the stomach or small intestine, and are a common source of symptoms of gastric irritation in children. The child seems never satisfied after food, and is fidgety, picking the nose, rubbing its eyes, and grinding its teeth, the tongue and mucous membranes look red, and the nutrition of the body suffers. In some cases severe symptoms of nervous disturbance or bowel derangement may be created in infants and young children by the presence of these worms. They may be solitary, or many in number, and may be passed spontaneously by the bowel, or may be vomited from the stomach, or they may crawl out of the mouth or nose while the child is asleep.

The favourite remedy is *santonin*, given in a similar way to the drug for tapeworm.

*Santonin* causes all objects to appear yellow to the patient.

(iii) The THREAD WORM is so called because it resembles little pieces of cotton. These worms occur in large numbers in the large intestine and rectum, and set up considerable irritation, especially around the anus.

*Santonin* is also of value here, but the most effective method of removing thread worms is by the use of enemata. The bowel should be first cleared by a copious injection of warm water, and afterwards five or six ounces of a solution of common salt, in the proportion of one teaspoonful to four ounces of water, should be injected and retained for a few minutes, or the same quantity of an infusion of *quassia* may be employed instead.

Great cleanliness of the parts should be insisted upon, especially after the action of the bowels, and a weak solution of carbolic (1-60) may be used with advantage to sponge the parts. An ointment composed of one drachm of powdered camphor to an ounce of lard, is useful to allay the itching within the orifice.

#### HONOURABLE MENTION.

The following competitors receive honourable mention—Miss Mary D. Hunter, Miss A. McCabe, Miss J. Jackson, Miss M. Bellingham, Miss F. Sheppard, Miss J. G. Gilchrist, Miss M. M. G. Bielby, Miss G. Stroud, Miss M. O'Brien, Miss P. Cunningham.

#### QUESTION FOR NEXT WEEK.

What are the duties of a nurse in preparation for, during, and after labour?

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