

OUR PRIZE COMPETITION.

MENTION THE SYMPTOMS THAT MIGHT INDICATE THE BEGINNING OF MASTITIS. IF ICE-BAGS ARE ORDERED WHAT IS THE PROPER METHOD OF PROCEDURE?

We have pleasure in awarding the prize this week to Miss F. Sheppard, Dudley Road, Tunbridge Wells.

PRIZE PAPER.

Mastitis, or Inflammation of the Breasts.—Mastitis may be produced by various causes, such as a blow, exposure to cold or wet, great mental excitement, excessive accumulation of milk, or undue pressure on the parts; it occurs most frequently within three months after parturition, and is characterized by heat, pain, redness, and swelling of the breasts.

When the breasts are irritable, the chief object should be the regulation of diet, which should be good and plentiful; the amount of fluid taken should be limited. In mastitis the pain is intense and of a throbbing nature, and often extends to the axillary glands; the breasts become tense and painful to the touch, and there is high inflammatory fever; if the inflammation does not subside in a few days suppuration may be expected.

If an abscess occurs in the case of this nature the doctor may make a free incision. There may be much tenderness; the skin is red, glazed, and shining, and there is throbbing in the breast; the axillary gland becomes swollen, the arm stiff at the shoulder, and there is pain when the arm is moved.

The lactiferous ducts are blocked sometimes, and produce an enlargement, and pain and uneasiness are felt in the breast from sympathy with other parts of the system. When the breasts are painful on account of their size and weight, they should be suspended by means of a soft silk handkerchief, tied over the neck.

Ice Poultice.—Have a fold of gutta-percha tissue a little longer than the area to be covered. Sprinkle on the lower leaf of the tissue a little linseed meal, sprinkled thinly, and on it place some ice crushed very small, to the depth of half an inch; sprinkle with some common salt, and on the top add another layer of linseed meal. Turn the upper leaf over the lower, and seal it up with turpentine or chloroform; put it in a flannel bag, and place under it a layer of lint or cotton-wool or soft linen. This is the most adaptable form of applying ice.

A rubber bag may be lightly suspended over the breast; a good substitute is a common bladder.

HONOURABLE MENTION.

The following competitors are accorded honourable mention:—Miss D. Mudie, Miss G. FitzGerald, Miss A. Calthorpe, Miss Macintyre, Miss O'Brien, Miss E. Jones.

QUESTION FOR NEXT WEEK.

What points would you specially observe in nursing a case of heart disease, and what arrangements would you make for the comfort of the patient?

CHRISTMAS TOYS.

The toys sent for competition and as gifts in response to our suggestion, filled four boxes, and we calculated they were sufficient for the needs of all the children to be found in two infirmaries, so they were divided and sent to Miss Fairbank, Superintendent Nurse at the Workhouse Infirmary, Alton, Hants, these included decorations for a Christmas Tree, which Miss Fairbank so much wanted to provide for her children; and the other two boxes were sent to Miss Phipps, Superintendent Nurse of the Infirmary, Barnet, Herts. Miss A. B. Howe's Model Children's Ward was sent to Queen Mary's Hospital for Children, Carshalton.

We have received the following acknowledgments:—

The Infirmary,
Alton, Hants.

DEAR MADAM,—The boxes of toys arrived quite safely; I thank you so much for them and please accept thanks from all the nurses. I am quite sure the patients will appreciate them. Again thanking you for your kindness in sending so many nice things.

I am,

Yours faithfully,
A. D. FAIRBANK.

The Infirmary,
Barnet, Herts.

DEAR MADAM,—I beg to acknowledge with very many thanks, two boxes of toys for my children at Christmas. We still have a child with us who treasures up a lovely Gollywog she had from you last year.

Again thanking you, assuring you that there will be many "thank you's" on Christmas morning.

Yours very truly,
C. A. PHIPPS.

As the Hon. Secretary of the Society for the State Registration of Trained Nurses is still in correspondence with the Secretary of King Edward's Hospital Fund for London, in reference to the resolution sent to that body for consideration, she desires to defer further reference to the subject to a future issue.

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