

tine, and we also very effectually prevent ourselves from being able to detect the onset of peritonitis, should this unfortunately supervene. Nowadays we give aspirin for the relief of the pain, and prevent or assuage distension by the use of pituitary extract hypodermically. Antipyrin and phenacetin are also preferable to opium in neuralgia, and especially in attacks of migraine or "sick headache."

Now that we have seen how it is possible to relieve pain, we come to the question, "Should we always relieve it?" I suppose everybody knows the type of person who flies for succour to drugs or doctors whenever she has any pain at all, and also her antitype who will, for instance, do a hard day's work at the washtub with an aching back that would drive her to distraction did she "give in to it," because she is thinking more of her household or of earning money to pay for her children's clothes than of her own ailments. Both attitudes have their disadvantages, however; even in the latter case it would be better doubtless for the poor woman to give up a few days' or even a week's washing or house cleaning, in order to have the displaced uterus which is at the bottom of her troubles put right by operation.

Still, her attitude is praiseworthy because it is unselfish, and the reason why the former type is a nuisance to everybody with her "vapourings" is because she thinks only of herself. The best course therefore to adopt is not to give her "pain killers" whenever she is unable to bear pain, but to attempt to divert her attention from her own inside. I have said "her," but I do not wish to imply that this class of patient is invariably a woman—far from it. Very many men are addicted to this sort of thing, and when they are, they are far more difficult to treat, because the natural tendency of a woman, after all, is to unselfishness, and with men this often has to be acquired.

We have to be very careful here, however; time after time does one see someone labelled by her friends as "neurotic" and consigned to a sort of social waste paper basket accordingly, when she really feels pain very acutely. As I said before, the same stimulus is interpreted by the brains of different people in very different ways. Some people, for instance, when they are ill really feel very acutely a shaft of light through a blind, or the pattering of childish feet up and down stairs, and it is a horrible injustice to fail to recognise this.

I need hardly enlarge here on the methods of taking a person out of himself—they must be adapted to the particular patient. Generally speaking, a common mistake is to tell him not to worry—a procedure which is kind but

idiotic. It is far better as a rule to encourage him to talk, and so find out what is really troubling him, and then suggest another point of view. My point is that we should endeavour to encourage and educate fortitude whenever we can—and the opportunity which nurses have for doing this is unrivalled. Inability to bear pain is generally due to worry about something entirely different, either in the past or future; and worry again is sometimes complicated by insufficient nourishment, either because the patient is not getting enough food, or because he has some form of indigestion which prevents him getting the utmost good out of what he does eat. But to dismiss a person from the field of our sympathy with the contemptuous label "neurotic," is merely to demonstrate our own uselessness, and proclaim our ignorance upon the housetops.

OUR PRIZE COMPETITION.

WHAT IS THE CAUSE OF TUBERCULOSIS? WHAT ORGANS AND TISSUES MAY BE ATTACKED IN THIS DISEASE? GIVE A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE TREATMENT AND MANAGEMENT OF ANY TWO FORMS OF TUBERCULOSIS.

We have pleasure in awarding the prize this week to Miss J. G. Gilchrist, Gilmore Place, Edinburgh.

PRIZE PAPER.

Tuberculosis is caused by the invasion of a pathogenic organism, the tubercle bacillus, which sets up destructive lesions in the various parts of the body, where a suitable, *i.e.*, weak or injured spot, may be favourable for the commencement of attack. The disease is infectious, communicable from man to man, and from animal to man. Its incidence is greatly induced in persons who have a constitutional predisposition from infected parents, combined with unfavourable environment, especially lack of oxygen, occasioned by deficient air space, lack of open windows, and overcrowded areas, as in a slum town district. Deficient lung expansion accompanied by mouth breathing, caused by adenoid growths, is, if untreated, in weakly persons a likely source of both infection and development if in contact with the disease germ. The human germ of tuberculosis gains entrance into the body chiefly through the respiratory tract, the dried-up particles in a phthisical patient's sputum containing the virulent germs being conveyed by dust-laden atmospheres and inhaled. The bovine type is chiefly conveyed through infected food materials, more particularly from milk obtained from an affected animal. The inci-

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