

## OUR PRIZE COMPETITION.

- (A) WHAT IS MEANT BY COUNTER-IRRITATION?  
 (B) NAME THE DIFFERENT WAYS OF MAKING COUNTER-IRRITATION.

We have pleasure in awarding the prize this week to Miss Mary E. Taylor, Western Hospital, Seagrave Road, Fulham, S.W.

## PRIZE PAPER.

Counter-irritation is a method used to counteract deep-seated inflammation, by causing congestion of the capillaries immediately below the skin by an action on the vaso-constrictor and vaso-dilator nerves which regulate size of capillaries. The following are the methods of making counter-irritation:—(1) Rubifacients, (2) vesicants, (3) pustulants, (4) cupping, (5) cauterly.

(1) *Rubifacients* are used as mild irritants; they produce hyperæmia.

*Uses.*—For bronchitis, congestion of the stomach with hæmatemesis, vague rheumatic pain, sprains, and when continued application is necessary to absorb thickenings due to chronic inflammation.

The following are rubifacients:—Fomentations, poultices, antiphlogistine, turpentine, mustard, capsicum, tincture of iodine.

*Method.*—Apply fomentations and poultices in usual way to affected area.

Antiphlogistine is a paste, which often supersedes poultices and fomentations.

*Uses.*—For bronchitis, synovitis, enteritis, and adenitis.

*Method.*—Boil tin of paste in pan of water until contents become semi-fluid, spread evenly on piece of lint required shape and size, cover with jaconet and wool, change daily.

Turpentine is used as a stupe. It is advisable to smear skin with olive oil before renewing stupe.

Mustard is used in form of a plaster if a more powerful action is required; spread on linseed poultice; apply for twenty minutes for an adult, ten minutes for a child or weak person.

A mustard leaf is first soaked in warm water and applied to affected area.

Tincture of Iodine.—Paint evenly over affected part, once or twice daily, until cuticle peels in flakes.

Capsicum, better known as "chili paste," is rubbed into skin.

(2) *Vesicants* are blistering applications, used when a more powerful action is desired.

*Uses.*—For pericarditis, pleurisy, sciatica, synovitis. The blister is raised a little distance from affected part. When applied to a joint a

blister should be raised above and below the joint.

*Method.*—Before applying blistering agent the skin should be well washed with soap and water, dried with ether. If fluid is used, define required circumference of blister with ring of olive oil to prevent trickling of fluid. When fluid has been absorbed, cover with gauze. Hold lightly in position by strapping; allow room for blister to rise, as pressure will cause pain.

A blister takes from six to twelve hours to rise; on a delicate skin it may rise in two hours. A simple fomentation will hasten its formation.

*To Dress a Blister.*—Place a swab or small saucer under blister, incise cuticle in most dependent part with sterile scissors, press gently until fluid is expelled. If fluid is to be tested, collect into sterile test-tube. Cuticle must not be removed until new skin has grown. Apply zinc or boracic dressing; renew daily.

If necessary that the blister should be kept open, the cuticle is removed with sterile scissors and an irritant ordered, spread on lint the exact size of the sore.

The following are vesicants:—Cantharides, pure acetic acid, linament of ammonia, chloroform.

Cantharides may be applied in three forms: (a) *Liquor epispasticus*, painted over defined area.

(b) *Emplastrum Cantharides*.—Smear black side with olive oil, place next to skin, hold in position by a bandage.

(c) *Cantharides ointment* rubbed into skin. If acetic acid, liniment of ammonia, and chloroform are used to raise blister, soak piece of lint in one of the fluids and apply. If chloroform is the agent selected, cover the lint with watch glass (to prevent evaporation).

(3) *Pustulants* are seldom used except in cases of chronic bronchitis; they raise a blister containing pus.

Croton oil and liniment of iodine are pustulants.

*Method.*—(a) Rub croton oil into skin, cover until blister rises.

(b) *Liniment of Iodine*.—Paint several coats over affected area.

(4) *Cupping* is the production of hyperæmia. It is used for deep-seated inflammation.

*Uses.*—For inflammation of kidney, sciatica, to relieve distress in cases of asthma, bronchitis, and heart disease.

Two methods: (a) dry cupping; (b) wet cupping.

(a) *Dry Cupping.*—Bell-shaped glass, with or without exhaust pump, or wine glasses.

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