

OUR PRIZE COMPETITION.

HOW WOULD YOU TREAT (a) AN EXTENSIVE SUPERFICIAL BURN? (b) A RUPTURED VARICOSE VEIN.

We have pleasure in awarding the prize this week to Miss A. M. Douglas, University College Hospital, Gower Street, W.C.1.

PRIZE PAPER.

A burn is an injury caused by dry heat such as flame or hot metal. A superficial burn includes the first two "degrees of burns," in which the epidermis and dermis may be injured, but not destroyed, and the wound heals without contraction.

The extent of a burn is more serious than its depth; as the more nerve endings there are injured the greater the shock. The third degree, in which the epidermis is destroyed, and the naked nerve papillæ are left exposed, is most painful.

In a case of burns the first treatment should be directed towards the prevention of shock. The wound should be covered to exclude the air, and the patient put to bed and made thoroughly warm: Morphia grs. $\frac{1}{4}$ for an adult may be necessary for the pain, and stimulants should be in readiness in case of heart failure. Some surgeons order a hot air bath (temperature 108° Fahr.) or a bath containing a warm, weak antiseptic solution, in which the patient is immersed for three or four hours, and then put to bed between warmed blankets.

If the wound be cleanly covered the dressing should be postponed till the patient has recovered from the first shock of the accident.

If any clothing be adherent to the wound it should not be dragged off. The garment must be cut, leaving these particles to come away subsequently. If possible it is less painful to immerse the injured part in sterile Boracic Lotion, or a solution of Bicarbonate of Soda while it is being cleansed. Sometimes an anæsthetic may be necessary, as the dressing of burns is most painful.

Air, which is full of microbes, should be excluded as much as possible, as the wound is an ideal site for the development of bacteria. Dressings should be applied in strips so that they can be changed one at a time. When the face is involved, a mask, cut out of lint, with holes for the eyes, nose and mouth, should be applied with, or over, the dressing.

When the epidermis is not broken, powder dressings are the best, as if the wound is kept dry there is less risk of sepsis. Pulv. Starch

and Oxide of Zinc is useful. Blisters should be cut at the lower edge, and the fluid absorbed by a swab, and not allowed to trickle over the wound. Picric Acid has the advantage of allaying pain and encouraging re-growth, leaving a smooth scar. Also the dressing need only be changed every other day. Lotia Rubra may be applied when healing is slow. No waterproof covering should be applied for burns, as it is most desirable to prevent the wound remaining clogged with septic discharge.

For ten days after the accident the patient will probably suffer from fever if the burn is deep seated, owing to the absorption from the wound into the system of poisonous products. The diet should be very nourishing, but light. The bowels must be regulated, and the temperature watched. The complications to avoid are pneumonia and sepsis.

Varicose Veins, or Varix, is a condition in which the veins become dilated and tortuous. It usually occurs in the lower limbs, scrotum (varicocele), or the rectum (hæmorrhoids).

If a vein in the lower limb be ruptured, digital pressure should be made at the bleeding point, the patient laid flat, and the limb raised. A firm pad and bandage should replace the digital pressure until the vein can be ligatured. All tight clothing should be loosened and precautions against shock and collapse taken. A tourniquet should not be applied unless all other methods of arresting the hæmorrhage fail.

In the case of hæmorrhoids, slight bleeding often relieves the patient and calls for no treatment. If it be excessive, medical assistance must at once be obtained.

When the vein has been removed or ligatured, prevention should be aimed at to avoid further rupture. The legs may be bandaged with special crêpe bandages, or elastic stockings worn; garters should never be worn and standing for a long time avoided. Persons suffering from hæmorrhoids should choose a vegetable diet and avoid all alcohol.

HONOURABLE MENTION.

The following competitors receive honourable mention:—Mrs. Farthing, Miss W. M. Appleton, Miss H. T. Inglis, Miss A. M. Douglas, Miss P. Thomson, Miss A. M. Cullen.

QUESTION FOR NEXT WEEK.

How would you treat (1) *asphyxia livida* and (2) *asphyxia pallida* in the newly-born infant?

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