

## OUR PRIZE COMPETITION.

DESCRIBE THE DAILY CARE WHICH SHOULD BE GIVEN TO THE FEET TO KEEP THEM IN GOOD CONDITION, AND THE PRINCIPAL INDICATIONS FOR CONSULTING (1) A CHIROPODIST, (2) A MEDICAL PRACTITIONER.

We have pleasure in awarding the prize this week to Miss M. Ramsey, S.R.N., Enmore Road, South Norwood, S.E.

### PRIZE PAPER.

To keep the feet in good condition, daily cleansing is absolutely necessary. Feet which perspire very much—a common and trying ailment—should be frequently washed in hot water; then dry thoroughly and put a little methylated spirit into the palm of the hand and rub over the feet, being careful that this is done far away from a fire or a lighted candle or lamp. The feet will not need to be dried, as the spirit very quickly evaporates. Dust with boracic powder before putting on the stockings.

Again, some people find the best remedy for aching and tender feet is to bathe them in almost cold water once a day. Let the water cover the ankles and it is surprising how it strengthens as well as soothes them. Bathing them in water, to which has been added some Tidman's sea salt, or boracic acid, is also good, but the plain luke-warm water answers just as well. After soaking the feet thoroughly, rub gently on the tread of the foot with pumice-stone. This prevents hard skin from accumulating and is preferable to cutting with a knife, which is often done and is a risky proceeding unless one is extremely careful. The nails should be kept fairly short.

As to foot-gear, the feet are a most important part of the body, and perhaps the most neglected. Cashmere or woollen stockings are the best for wear, also good hygienic boots and shoes which need not be ugly, even if they do have good, strong soles, with patent rubbers attached. These may be rather expensive in the first place, but a great saving in the end, as they will wear out several pairs of ordinary soles. Thin shoes will give endless colds, with very likely more serious consequences; pointed toes and high heels often cause bunions, which are very painful, ugly, and practically impossible to cure; tight shoes induce corns, also very painful and almost equally difficult to cure.

People whose occupation involves long hours of standing find much relief from soaking the feet in a foot bath, adding to each gallon a piece of washing soda as large as a pigeon's egg. The water should be as hot as can be

borne, and as it cools, more hot water should be added by degrees. After ten minutes put the feet into tepid water minus the soda and dry thoroughly; if there are any little cracks under the toes, paint with tincture of myrrh and water in equal parts. It will smart for a minute; then put on dry talcum powder, and massage the foot upwards with powder. Borax or bicarbonate of potash are also good to put in the foot bath. Rest the feet by putting them up, when possible.

Amongst the minor troubles to which the feet are subject, are chilblains. The symptoms are well known. The patient complains of burning and itching and when the stocking is taken off the parts are found to be red, shiny, swollen and sensitive. The remedy is to have shoes sufficiently large, with soft woollen or cashmere stockings. Then as to treatment, bathe the foot with warm water, wash with a good soap, then rub briskly, dry thoroughly. Repeat twice daily, if necessary. If the chilblains are broken, they must be treated with a little soothing salve.

### *Indications for consulting a chiropodist.*

- (1) Corns, bunions, and callosities.
- (2) Toenails inclined to ingrow.
- (3) Footsore feet.

### *Indications for consulting a doctor.*

- (1) Cold and clammy feet continuously (perhaps due to general debility).
- (2) Inflamed ingrowing toenails.
- (3) Severe sprains.
- (4) Inflamed feet.
- (5) Flat-foot.
- (6) Feet which perspire freely.
- (7) Where much swelling is present.

### HONOURABLE MENTION.

The following competitors receive honourable mention:—Miss M. M. Bielby, Miss M. James, Miss J. Wright.

Miss Bielby writes:—"The first essential to retaining normal feet is shoes constructed on lines securing absolute freedom from pressure, allowing straight toes, the natural use of every joint, muscle, and tendon, and free circulation. The second is that the skin of the feet be kept perfectly clean and supple, which may best be achieved by the daily bath. With a tendency to the formation of callus, the affected area should be rubbed over with smooth pumice-stone in the bath. The third essential is daily exercise of all the muscles of the feet, the benefit of this depending on pointing the feet in a straight line, not outwards."

### QUESTION FOR NEXT WEEK.

What are the causes of malnutrition, its effects, and some of the remedies?

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