

## OUR PRIZE COMPETITION.

HOW WOULD YOU CLEAN AND STERILISE THE FOLLOWING:—(a) GUM ELASTIC AND SILK-WEBBED CATHETER; (b) GLASS SYRINGE; (c) BED MACKINTOSH; (d) FEEDING CUP; (e) DRESSING TOWEL?

We have pleasure in awarding the prize this month to Miss Edith L. Rand, St. Leonard's Hospital, Shoreditch, N.1.

### PRIZE PAPER.

#### 1. Gum Elastic Catheter.

*To Clean.*—Hold the catheter under the cold water tap, and allow the cold water to run through the catheter from the eye downwards. To syringe through from the eye with cold water is a better method, for force of pressure behind the flow will remove any adhering matter from the interior. Wash the catheter next in warm soapy water (to remove any foreign substance from the outside, particularly as gum elastic catheters are usually used for men and are then lubricated). Syringe again with warm water to remove the soapy water from inside and dry. To dry the inside a stilette must be passed, drawn out and dried, passed again and dried, until no more moisture is left on the stilette. The catheter is then ready for sterilising.

*To Sterilise.*—Gum elastic cannot be sterilised by boiling as moist heat reduces the material to pulp; there are two efficient methods of sterilising:—

(1) Place the catheter in an air-tight glass jar with two Formalin tablets; the Formalin will give off its gas and in half-an-hour the catheters are sterile. They can safely be left stored thus and are ready for use at any time. Care must be taken that the catheters are really dry before placing them in Formalin vapour.

(2) The catheter can be immersed in 1-500 Perchloride of Mercury and left for two hours and is then fit to use.

#### 2. To Clean a Glass Syringe.

*Serum syringe.*—If the syringe has been used for aspirating a purulent cavity, e.g., Thoracic Empyema, the pus will need to be removed with cold water. Filling and expelling in cold water will clean all adhering pus, and a final saline plunge will clear it. Rinse again in cold water, examine for any cloudiness which will denote persisting pus, when warm soapy water will be useful, rinse again in warm water and it is ready for sterilising.

Take the plunger, top and barrel separately, wrap in old linen, place in tepid water in a steriliser and bring to the boil in a bowl, boil for 20 minutes.

*Needles.*—With drawing cold water through the needle once or twice, the needle will be clean; if it is wanted sterile immediately, holding in boiling water with forceps for one minute is sufficient.

Needles can also be sterilised in an autoclave with superheated steam. For taking a Wasserman blood reaction or giving sera, needles and glass syringe should be sterilised and prepared dry, i.e., covered with a sterile towel in a sterile tray.

For exploring a cavity the syringe is prepared sterile in either Isotonic saline or sterile water according to the Surgeon's wish.

*Glass syringe.*—If the syringe has been used for syringing dyes, e.g., Mercurochrome, it will need to be cleaned with warm soapy water; several fillings will be necessary to remove the dye.

*Sterilising.*—The two portions are wrapped separately in old linen, placed in a bowl in warm water in steriliser, brought to the boil and boiled for twenty minutes at least.

#### 3. Bed Mackintosh.

*To Clean.*—Carbolise first on removing the mackintosh by immersing in 1-20 Carbolic Acid lotion for half-an-hour.

Scrub with hot soapy water both sides, rinse in warm water and hang over a roller to dry.

*To Sterilise.*—Immerse mackintosh in Carbolic Acid lotion 1-20 for two hours, dry with a sterile towel and roll in another sterile towel. (Rolled, not folded, to avoid any cracking.)

#### 4. Feeding Cup.

*To Clean.*—Leave the cup in Carbolic Acid lotion 1-20 for two hours first if the cup has been used by anyone with any infectious condition in or near the mouth. Clean with hot soda water, using a small brush for the mouthpiece and salt rubbed on any stains will quickly remove them. Examine the cup, especially the mouthpiece, for any cracks or chips; rinse in hot water.

*To Sterilise.*—Place in clear hot water in a bowl, bring to the boil and boil for half-an-hour.

#### 5. Dressing Towel.

*To Clean.*—Remove the stains first (if any); cold water or Hydrogen Peroxide will remove bloodstains, Carbolic will remove Iodine stains, leaving soaking until bleached. Lysol 1-160 solution will take out Flavine and other dyes.

Wash as any article of linen with hot soapy water with a little soda, hang if possible in the sun to dry and bleach, fold when dry and the towel will be clean.

*To Sterilise.*—Place in a drum, open the collar to allow the holes to be visible, place the drum in an Autoclave for three hours—one hour to get steam up, one hour for steam penetration and one hour to cool and dry. Remove the drum, close holes and store ready for use.

*In a private house* where no superheated steam is available, the towel can be cleaned as above, boiled for half-an-hour in a wringer, wrung out aseptically as a fomentation as dry as possible, placed between the folds of a carbolised sheet of batiste or jaconet and laid on a piece of newspaper in the hot oven to dry, with the door a little ajar to let out the steam.

### HONOURABLE MENTION.

Miss G. K. Bush, North Hill, Highgate, receives honourable mention for an admirable paper. We specially approve after bed mackintosh has been cleansed and disinfected it should hang in the open air, and when free from damp, be powdered with starch and placed on roller stand until required for use.

### QUESTION FOR NEXT MONTH.

Describe the symptoms of Asthma, and how it may be relieved.

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