ERYSIPELAS.

By Miss A. M. Burke.

OWING to the great and constant care exercised in present-day hospitals this disease is rarely met with. Erysipelas is a very contagious disease caused by the streptococcus erysipelates. It very rarely makes its appearance in an epidemic form, but has been known to do so. There are many causes which bring about an attack of erysipelas, the chief causes being:—

(1) Bad hygienic surroundings.
(2) Abrasions or wounds
(3) Run down or debilitated constitution.
(4) The idiopathic form.

On examining the affected part it will be found to be red or inflamed and easily distinguishable from its surroundings by a rash. At the onset the patient gets fever accompanied with a rigor, the degree of fever generally corresponding to the severity of the disease. The fever does not last more than three or four days, but comes on at intervals. It is supposed to come on when the toxins become very active. Although the fever only lasts such a short time, the disease generally lasts from seven to twenty-one days. I have seen erysipelas due to the above causes, and in each instance the person was old and in a debilitated condition.

Erysipelas attacks different parts of the body and may be localised or spread.

Varieties—Facial. The face and eyes become swollen and red, small blisters or blebs form on the forehead, ears and eyelids, giving to the person a most hideous appearance. There is great danger in this form as it may spread upwards to the head causing meningitis, or downwards to the neck and chest when there generally will be suppuration and abscesses. In this condition the disease takes long to cure.

(2) Faucial Erysipelas.
(3) Scrotal Erysipelas.
(4) Cellulo-cutaneous Erysipelas.

Erysipelas causes great weakness, and leaves the patient lacking in vitality, which proves the poisonous effect of the toxins in the circulation. Of course individual cases vary according to the severity of the attack. Light nourishing diet should be given and the strength maintained.

Treatment—The patient being under a doctor, his orders usually are:—strict isolation, drugs are very moderately used, generally a mixture of Tinct Ferri Perch., four to six times daily. The affected part is painted with a solution of either Iodine, Ichthyol, Nitrate of Silver, etc., and when the condition is very bad usually an injection of anti-streptococci serum 20-30cc s given subcutaneously once or twice a day.

As this disease may be spread by the nurse or attendant every precaution of asepsis and disinfection should be carried out by her. As the germ also attaches itself to clothing, the wall, etc., precautions should be taken to disinfect and sterilize things used.

The chief things to observe in nursing a case are therefore to isolate the patient, to maintain his strength by proper diet, and to observe thorough asepsis and disinfection.

POEM.

TE DEUM.

We thank Thee, O our God, for this
Long fought-for, hoped-for, prayed-for peace
Thou dost cast down, and Thou upraise,
Thine hand doth order all our ways.

Lift all our hearts to nobler life,
For ever freed from fear of strife;
Let all men everywhere in Thee
Possess their souls in liberty.

Safe in Thy Love we leave our dead;
Heal all the wounds that war has made.
And help us to uproot each wrong,
Which still among us waxeth strong.

Break all the bars that hold apart
All men of nobler mind and heart;
Let all men find alone in Thee
Their one and only sovereignty.

JOHN OXENHAM.

NEW MEMBER.

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