

External piles have, when the skin is thin, the uniform bluish tint of a vein: while internal piles present that purplish colour which resembles the intense congestion of strangled mucous membrane.

The former may be snipped off, and there is no danger of hemorrhage after the vein has emptied itself; the latter, if cut away, bleed continuously and profusely, the blood being arterial and not venous. This fact leads us to a question of great practical interest, viz. ought internal piles ever be excised? A very great variety of opinion exists on the point. Many eminent surgeons advocate the propriety of the excision of all kinds of hemorrhoids, arguing that the ligature occasions excessive danger from phlebitis, peritonitis, pelvic abscesses; and while the advocates of the ligature contend that the fatal results of hemorrhage which has so often ensued from excision, ought to render the operation unjustifiable, it may be safely mentioned, that both operations, in the hands of the most skillful of our profession, have repeatedly proved fatal, so much so that many have discontinued both, chiefly that of excision.

Within the last few years the surgical treatment of this class of affections has undergone a great improvement, by an agent which bids fair to supersede all other mode of interference. I allude to the application of strong nitric-acid, which has proved eminently successful. Its use is greatly to be preferred either to excision or the ligature, as being less painful, very certain in its results, and free from all danger. With the timid male or female it excites no apprehension, and a second application, should it be required, is never objected to.

Its use was first introduced into the Dublin School of Surgery by M. G. Cusack, who has used it with uniform success for some years. While attending his clinique in Madame Steeven's Hospital, I had numerous opportunities of witnessing the success with which he used it, and since then I have myself applied it in many cases with similar results.

Mr. Cusack was very particular in its mode of application. The best and readiest mode is by means of a small hair-brush made expressly for the purpose; or if not procurable, a flat piece of wood, the size of a spatula, but a little narrower at the end, is to be wet with the strong acid, and applied decidedly over the pile till its surface becomes a greyish white. A little oil is then smeared over the part, in order to prevent any free acid affecting the neighbouring parts. The chief things to be attended to, are not to take up too much of the acid on the stick, lest it drop on the surrounding parts, and to apply it effectually so as to destroy the mucous membrane which covers the pile. When this is done, the slough caused by the acid soon comes away, leaving a healthy granulating surface, which rapidly heals, and by its contraction produces a curative pressure on the subjacent distended hæmorrhoidal vessels. Fre-