

THE HYGIENE OF CHILDBEARING

table fork covered with a towel may be inserted between the teeth. If the doctor's arrival be long delayed, the patient may be given a sweat by means of blankets and hot water bottles, care being taken not to burn her. This accident may easily happen in the excitement. She may also be given a large injection of warm salt-water (an even teaspoonful to a pint). This should be passed slowly into the rectum with a fountain syringe to be absorbed into the system.

For the principal treatment, however, the physician must be depended upon.

Prevention.—With convulsions as with many other troubles, prevention is better than cure. The up-to-date physician using modern methods can nearly always prevent convulsions if he has the opportunity to treat the patient beforehand. For this reason a patient should always engage her physician at least three months before her confinement, and place herself in his care from that time on.

Convulsions are due to a disorder of the kidneys. It is the function of these organs to separate the urine from the blood, thus carrying off certain poisonous body-wastes which would cause death if retained in the system. For some reason not yet clearly understood, pregnancy is liable in some cases to so derange the action of the kidneys that the system is poisoned and the patient placed in great danger. This condition is often called Albuminuria of Pregnancy, because one of the symptoms is usually the presence of albumen in the urine. It cannot be seen in the urine without making a test.