

life. These were the oxyuris vermicularis, or ascaris vermicularis, which give rise to intolerable itching about the anus and even tenesmus.

One other case, Mr. W., aet 40, came to be treated for piles, which however, proved to be eczema of the anus.

Do not be misled either by the patient telling you that they have been doctored for piles for several years. In nine cases out of ten enquiry proves that the doctor was himself and the treatment consisted in the liberal application of the numerous quack ointments so generally advertised, while in the tenth case the M.D. who attended them failed to diagnose the disease before treating it.

Never, therefore, undertake the treatment of a case about the anus or rectum until you have made a thorough examination and certain diagnosis.

With these words of warning let me remind you that piles are essentially enlarged hæmorrhoidal veins, surrounded by infiltrated cellular tissue. They are either situated outside the anus and are covered with skin and called external, or they are situated inside the sphincter, covered with mucous membrane, and are called internal. If you remember the vascular supply of the lower end of the bowels, a great deal of light will be thrown on the nature and cause of piles. The rectum and anus receive their blood supply from three principal sources; the upper third is supplied from the superior hæmorrhoidal, a branch of the superior mesenteric artery; the corresponding vein for which empties into the vein of the same name; the middle third receives its vascular supply from inferior mesenteric artery, and this vein, like the previous one being a branch of the portal system, its blood has to go through the liver; but the lower third, including the anus, receives its supply from the inferior hæmorrhoidal, a branch of the internal pudic, and the blood from it returns by the vein of the same name into the internal iliac and vena cava inferior, and does not go through the liver, not having anything to do with the portal system. From this you will readily understand that anything obstructing the return of blood from the portal vein or any of its branches, such as a hard contracting liver or a plug of hard fecal matter pressing on the delicate walled veins in the internal tube would dam back the blood in the superior and middle hæmorrhoidal veins, which, being distended and subsequently inflamed, would become very painful and bleed when pressed upon

by a hard peice of feces, giving bleeding internal piles. While anything preventing the free return of blood by the inferior vena cava, such as a distended right aurical from heart disease or pressure upon the inferior vena cava from an enlarged liver, or pressure on the internal pudic vein, as it passes over the spine of the ischium by sitting for many months on a soft cushioned chair; the soft cushion following the vein into the protected channel nature had made for it. Any of these cases would produce external piles because they would prevent the free return of blood from the inferior hæmorrhoidal veins.

Bleeding is much more frequent from the internal variety than from the external, because the veins are much better supported and covered by the skin in the latter.

In some of the cases I have had, the bleeding was very profuse, indeed in such large quantities that the pallor of the cheeks, the weakness of the voice and step, and the apathy and general debility, attested that a large portion of their blood had been drawn off, and was only replaced with water, the blood in these cases being generally of a dark color showing that the vein itself had burst.

In a few of the cases the bleeding was also copious but of a bright red color coming from the laceration of one of the enlarged arteries of the inflamed mucous membrane covering the distended vein.

In the remaining and perhaps most frequent cases, the bleeding came from engorged capillaries and was small in quantity.

As piles are nothing more or less than varicose veins of the rectum, they are produced by the same causes as produce varicose veins of the legs. Thus they are both frequent in pregnant women, because the enlarged uterus compresses the internal or common iliac veins; they are also rarely absent from heavy drinkers, both because alcohol changes the normal condition of the liver and because moreover, the walls of the veins and heart are relaxed and weak.

One of the first instruments I would recommend you to purchase in starting practice is a rectal speculum. This one made on the same principle as a Fergusons vaginal speculum, but with a slit down one side is the one I prefer. There is another very good one somewhat larger than this, but with the addition of a glass side in the opening, which