

BURNS

(Written for "The Listener" by DR. H. B. TURBOTT, Director of the Division of School Hygiene, Health Department)



IN peace time, hundreds of people die annually in New Zealand from accidents; in fact, about five per cent of the total deaths, apart from suicide, result not from disease but from external causes. Poisoning, firearms, accidents in mines and quarries—after motor-cars—claim many victims, and are remembered as accidental causes because they get a fair share of publicity. Burns and scalds linger in our minds because of the associated pain. It takes a year-book to remind us that burns kill more people each year in peace time than poisons or firearms. And dozens more are maimed and scarred, have spoilt limbs, fingers or faces, for every death from fire, steam, or boiling water.

In war time, burns are vividly prominent as a cause of death and disablement. If our country is raided, burns will vie with wounds and fractures for pride of place in first aid and dressing stations. With prompt hospital treatment, apparently hopeless burns can be saved nowadays. Great advances have been made in burn treatments. The Chinese, knowledgeable 5,000 years ago, covered their burns with wet tea leaves. In the 'twenties of this century, this knowledge was applied scientifically in the tannic acid treatment of burns. This war has shown that the tanning that protects the burnt area and lets healing go on nicely underneath is too tight over deep burns, and makes bad scars on faces and hands in many cases, so much so that fingers may lose mobility. Therefore, tannic acid treatment is no longer advised for bad burns of face and hands.

Dyes and Salt

In the 'thirties of this century, the aniline dyes were experimented with—at first Gentian violet, and later three dyes in combination—crystal violet, brilliant green, and acriflavine. These dye preparations are sprayed on to the trimmed burnt area. They have been very useful indeed, and many fighter pilots and bomber crews are grateful for this discovery. These dye preparations can be used anywhere on the body.

Salt solution or saline treatment of burns is used in hospitals in several ways, as continuous baths or by a sluicing method. An ingenious envelope has been used to hold saline solution round limbs. To overcome the desperate shock of burns, blood transfusions or plasma injections are given. Lately, the new wonder drugs of the sulphapyridine group are being tried out with apparently good results on burns—the drug is sprayed on the burnt area.

All bad burns of second or third degree must go to the hospital. Hospital folk don't want messy prepara-

tions over burns that have to be cleared away before they can give treatments. For all burns of serious size, with blistering and perhaps loss of flesh, apply only a saline dressing. Everybody has salt in the house. Make a solution of teaspoon to the pint strength, soak lint strips, cover the burn and keep moist with saline until arrival at dressing station or hospital.

Now for small burns in the home, and for those in possible emergencies of war that do not need to go to hospital or dressing stations, there should be in the cupboard either a tube of Gentian violet jelly, triple dye jelly, or tannic acid jelly (preferable with acriflavine). If you cannot get these from your chemist, you can have cod-liver oil, or cod-liver oil with vaseline, or

eucalyptus and vaseline on hand. If you should be caught in an emergency, remember the saline treatment. If you can't get salt at the moment, you may find some tea. Put a handful in the teapot, make a strong tea with boiling water, and use this as a burn dressing.

(NEXT WEEK: "Guns or Butter," by Dr. Muriel Bell)

It's tops

FOR WINTER
BREAKFASTS

WEET-BIX

and Hot Milk



MORE FLAVOUR

No duty dish, this! Weet-Bix and milk is the warming, cereal breakfast that has appetite appeal. It's delicious . . . and sustaining too. No peckish feeling mid-morning after a hearty plateful.

MORE FOOD VALUE

Only the choicest, plumpest, sun-ripened wheat is used for Weet-Bix. The whole of the grain goes in with its sixteen precious food elements. And whole wheat, like milk, is a complete and perfect food.

MORE ECONOMICAL

No waste with Weet-Bix. Served straight from the packet, Weet-Bix is already toasted to a crisp, golden brown. No measuring, cooking, or messy pots to soak and clean afterwards.

A SAVING

In fuel, money, labour. And time—(Take forty more winks in bed and still have breakfast ready on the dot!)

WEET-BIX
A SANITARIUM HEALTH FOOD

Ask also for:—

Granose, Bixies, Puffed Wheat, Betta Peanut Butter, San-Bran, Puffed Rice.

THE WORD SANITARIUM IS A GUIDE TO PURE FOODS