

Letters, Notes, and Answers.

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QUERIES AND ANSWERS.

REFERRED PAIN.

DR. J. N. DEACON (East Molesey) writes in reply to "Y. T.": *Symptoms and their Interpretations*, by the late Sir James Mackenzie, deals with this subject.

DR. J. E. SHARPLEY (Kirtton Lindsey) writes in reply to "Y. T.": *Pain: Its Origin, Conduction, Perception, and Diagnostic Significance*, by R. J. Behan, M.D. (New York and London: D. Appleton and Co., 1914), is a comprehensive work containing many references; an excellent index to referred and reflected pain.

INCOME TAX.

"J." is one of four partners, and by agreement with the other three has insured himself against sickness; the inspector refuses to allow the deduction of the premiums in computing the firm's profits.

. In our opinion the premiums paid by "J." in regard of the future risk of sickness cannot in strictness be deducted as expenses incurred in earning the profits assessed. On the other hand, we are clear that any sums payable under the policy in the event of "J.'s" sickness are not taxable. We suggest that if his inspector will give him an assurance on the latter point he might drop his contention that the premiums should be allowed to him.

"N. G." and his partner gave up a dental practice in London at January 31st, 1926, and have since started a new practice elsewhere in medical radiology and electrology. They hold appointments at a hospital in London, and since January "N. G.'s" partner has seen private patients there.

. We assume that "N. G." can show that the dental practice was definitely given up—for example, by sale or mere discontinuance. On that assumption the partners are liable for the year ended April 5th, 1926, on (1) ten-twelfths of the average profits of that practice plus (2) their actual earnings for the two months, February and March, 1926. For the year ending April 5th, 1927, they will be liable on (1) their actual profits in the new practice for the first twelve months (or for the less period if the practice was started after April 5th, 1926) plus (2) the amount of their earnings from the hospital appointment and the casual dental patients whom they have retained. The expense of travelling to London to see the patients there seems to us to arise from the removal to set up a practice elsewhere rather than from the nature of the work, but there is a chance that the inspector would allow it.

LETTERS, NOTES, ETC.

THE ACTION OF DRUGS ON PLANTS.

SIR JAGADIS BOSE returned to the Royal Society of Medicine on June 2nd to deliver another "occasional lecture" on the action of alkaloids and other substances on the pulse of the plant and of the animal. The lecture and the experiments were largely a repetition of what he gave before the society in December,

1923, reported in these columns at the time. He began by drawing attention to the similarities between the plant and the animal in respect of contractile tissue and what he called in both cases nervous reactions, and described his own attempts to obtain an exact record of the responses to stimuli in the mimosa and other sensitive plants. The heart of a plant, he said, was not easy to discover, but it was affected, in the same way as the animal heart, by the administration of minute quantities of certain drugs in the way of stimulus and depression. There were substances which stopped the heart at contraction and others which stopped it at diastole, and it was possible to inflict what appeared to be a mortal blow upon the plant's heart with one drug and almost immediately to revive it with another which acted as an antidote. The sap of the plant, as the conveyor of nutrient material, corresponded to the blood of the animal, and he contested the theory that the movement of the sap was not physiological, but due to some unknown physical cause. To get a record of the mechanical pulsation of, say, the desmodium or any plant was difficult because the arteries of a plant were buried deeply in its interior, and the dilatation and contraction, compared with those of the animal, were extremely feeble, but the task was not hopeless. It needed a hand of infinitely more delicacy than the human hand to feel the plant's pulse, but with the help of an electric probe and a galvanometer he had succeeded in recording pulsations. He produced a plant which, on a dull day of London June, he had been restoring to vitality right up to the moment of the experiment by a prolonged bath of artificial sunlight, and on this he brought to bear in turn a whole battery of stimulants and depressants, poisons and their antidotes, administering to the plant a small amount of each, to illustrate the plant's alternate failure and revival. The attention of the audience was directed to the movement of a slit of light on the screen; when it moved in one direction it signified that the plant, under the almost immediate action of, say, potassium bromide was dying, and when it moved in the other direction that it had revived under the influence of a cardiac stimulant. He repeated this experiment with many substances, including small doses of cobra venom, which on plants and on small animals (though the animals did not figure in the demonstration) had an effect quite surprising in its violence.

A TRIBUTE TO SIR THOMAS BROWNE.

THOSE members of the medical profession to whom Sir Thomas Browne of Norwich, the author of *Religio Medici*, is still a lively inspiration and an "inexhaustible store of entertainment" may be interested in a copy of the second edition (published 1650) of his *Pseudodoxia Epidemica: or, Enquiries into Received Tenets and Commonly Presumed Truths*, which is to be sold by auction at Hodgson's Rooms, Chancery Lane, this afternoon (Friday, June 11th). On the flyleaf of this volume is a manuscript note, written in a fine hand, as follows: "FRANCES LE GROS: THIS BOOKE GIVEN MEE BY THE WORTHY AUTHOR MY HONOR'D FREINDE, when I was one of his family and most happy in beeing so: 1650." It was to Thomas Le Gros, of Crostwick, that Browne dedicated a few years later his *Hydriotaphia*; doubtless he was a relative of the Frances to whom Browne gave this copy of the *Pseudodoxia*. Further still, the volume contains the bookplate of Sir William Trumbull (1639-1716), who is known to have travelled in 1664-65 in company with Edward, the eldest son of Sir Thomas Browne. In the same sale are a considerable number of old medical books, none of them of really surpassing interest or rarity: the best is an English translation of Alexis of Piedmont in three parts (1562-63-66), printed in London; and another worth mentioning is a French treatise on sterility, miscarriage, obstetrics, and gynaecology, by L. Bourgeois (1659), midwife to the Queen of France.

MEDICAL GOLF.

THE summer meeting of the Shropshire Medical Golf Association was held on the Church Stretton course on Sunday, May 30th. The course was in excellent order, but a very strong wind prevailed throughout the day.

The Captain's Prize, presented by Dr. Richardson (Grinshill), for which there were twenty-eight entries, was won by Dr. T. R. Elliott. Leading scores were:

Dr. T. R. Elliott...	...	...	82	-	7	=	75
Mr. W. S. Edmond	...	...	97	-	20	=	77
Dr. I. B. Richardson	...	...	90	-	12	=	78
Dr. J. Wheatley	...	...	97	-	18	=	79
Dr. G. Laurence	...	...	95	-	14	=	81
Dr. A. V. Mackenzie	...	...	90	-	8	=	82
Dr. R. H. Urwick	...	...	92	-	10	=	82
Mr. A. Lavelle	...	...	97	-	15	=	82
Dr. J. A. Ireland	...	...	93	-	10	=	83
Dr. H. G. Beckett	...	...	96	-	13	=	83

The foursomes competition was won by Mr. A. Lavelle and Dr. Glynn Pigott = 4 down, Dr. J. Wheatley and Dr. T. R. Elliott = 7 down, Dr. Richardson and Dr. H. G. Beckett = 8 down.

The next meeting has been fixed for October 10th at the Wrekin Golf Club, Wellington.

VACANCIES.

NOTIFICATIONS of offices vacant in universities, medical colleges, and of vacant resident and other appointments at hospitals, will be found at pages 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 42, and 43 of our advertisement columns, and advertisements as to partnerships, assistantships, and locumtenencies at pages 40 and 41.

A short summary of vacant posts notified in the advertisement columns appears in the *Supplement* at page 215.