

THE KING has confirmed the appointment of Dr. G. Cecil Strathairn, Director of Health, to be a nominated official member of the Legislative Council of the Colony of Cyprus.

DURING 1928 more than fifty lectures on malaria, illustrated with lantern slides, were delivered in the Chinese schools and clubs in Perak and other towns in Malaya, about 10,000 people attending them. Audiences were recruited by an attendant perambulating the towns with a handbell. The importance of the crusade is illustrated by the fact that, out of 34,153 deaths in the Federated Malay States in 1925, no fewer than 14,377 were registered as being due to fever.

THE Grand Prix of the Société des Gens de Lettres has been awarded this year to a medical man, Dr. Pierre Dominique Jacques Lucchini, who writes under the name of Pierre Lominque.

PROFESSOR SEMASCHKO of Moscow has resigned his post of commissioner of public health.

THE Académie des Sciences has decided to recommend the Institut de France to award the Osiris prize of 200,000 francs to Professor Gley, who holds the chair of physiology at the Collège de France.

DR. MORAX, ophthalmologist to the Hôpital Lariboisière, has been elected a member of the Académie de Médecine in the surgical section.

DURING the academic year 1928-29, 1,069 diplomas of doctor in medicine were conferred by the various French faculties.

Letters, Notes, and Answers.

All communications in regard to editorial business should be addressed to **THE EDITOR, British Medical Journal, British Medical Association House, Tavistock Square, W.C.1.**

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QUERIES AND ANSWERS.

SUPPLY OF PRESSURE APPLICATORS IN THE FINSSEN LIGHT TREATMENT.

"J. B." writes: I should be glad to learn where it is possible to obtain pressure applicators for circulating water, such as are used in the Finsse light treatment. I have applied to one or two electrical firms, but they apparently wish to sell the whole Finsse-Reyn apparatus, and just at present I want applicators only.

TREATMENT OF ASTHMA.

"A. V." writes to suggest that "M. E. P." (March 22nd, p. 575) should try the mercury vapour lamp at 2 ft., beginning with two minutes and leading up to six minutes for twelve applications, and repeating the treatment after a month's rest.

ENLARGED PROSTATE AND PROSTATECTOMY.

"H. W." writes: I have to record one case where innunction and massage of the prostate per rectum with a neutral petroleum unguent of iodine greatly relieved the frequency of micturition; the stream of urine passed is much fuller, indicating that the iodine is having a local effect. Since we often see glandular and indurated masses disappear with massage and iodine in other situations, can we not hope by this or other methods to avoid operative intervention, in some cases at least? I should be glad to have an expression of opinion with regard to the permanent effect of remedies other than surgical treatment, which has its limitations. I note in the *Journal* of March 15th (p. 494) that reference is made to static electricity as a method of reducing the hypertrophy and symptoms.

LETTERS, NOTES, ETC.

EARLY DIAGNOSIS OF TUBERCULOSIS.

DR. W. M. CROFTON (University College, Dublin) writes: The making of an early diagnosis in tuberculous disease is indeed of first importance. But eliciting of physical signs in a lung, however delicate, is not making an early diagnosis; it is making a diagnosis of well-established disease, and this diagnosis is only confirmed by the finding of tubercle bacilli. At this stage of the disease apparently there is complete scepticism about the capacity to cure it by the methods at present in use. Wingfield writes: "When once it [phthisis] has progressed to the extent of being clinically recognized, it appears to be eventually almost universally fatal." This is typical of the almost universal opinion among tuberculosis experts, as elicited by Gordon Tippet. No one can make an early diagnosis. No one can say a case is cured, for so many cases apparently cured break down again. There is therefore no sound criterion of cure. Everybody connected with the disease is in a hopeless state of mind about it. Moreover, they are so pursued by ancient bogies that the only test, the subcutaneous tuberculin test, which has been proved to be reliable by hundreds of thousands of post-mortems in cattle, must not be used, since it is dangerous in human beings. The way general and focal reactions after tuberculin inoculation are spoken of and written about one would think they were uniformly fatal, instead of being manifestations of the immunizing process which leaves the patient on a higher plane of resistance to the tubercle bacillus than before such a reaction had occurred. There are, then, two kinds of opinion about the test: (1) that of those who do not believe in its absolute diagnostic value, and (2) that of those who believe in its diagnostic value, but think it too dangerous to use in human beings. The first class had better consult their veterinary brethren and ascertain its almost complete reliability, and the second ought to follow the work of those who use tuberculin in their treatment of the disease, and so get rid of this absurd phobia, which is holding up so seriously our control of the disease. Apart from it, there is no reliable test for either the early diagnosis of the disease or the cure of it.

MEASLES IN LATER LIFE.

DR. R. BALFOUR GRAHAM (Leven, Fife) writes: With reference to the case of measles at the age of 57, described by Professor A. J. Hall in the *Journal* of March 29th (p. 586), might I record a more remarkable one in point of age in a spinster, aged 76? Had it not been that there was measles about, and that the day attendant of the old lady had a case of measles in her own house (from which source, perhaps, came the infection), I should have doubted my diagnosis, but to make sure I asked Dr. J. M. Johnstone of Leven to see the case, and he at once confirmed it. There was nothing very remarkable about the course of the illness, the symptoms of which resembled pretty much those in Professor Hall's case, the only noteworthy point being that my patient made a complete and speedy recovery after about ten days' illness. She is not sure if she has ever had measles before, but a second attack is not uncommon in my experience.

DR. N. DOUGLAS MACKAY (Aberfeldy) records two cases of measles which occurred in his practice some years ago. The first, a woman aged 74, was infected during a local epidemic. Beyond a mild bronchial catarrh, too slight to be dignified with the name of complication, the attack ran a normal course, and the patient made a perfect recovery. The second case, in a woman aged 78, was sporadic so far as this district was concerned, and the only channel by which infection could have reached the patient was a daughter who, two weeks or so before the commencement of the attack, had returned home from visiting in a house where several children were down with measles. This was the only possible source that could be traced, and it was noteworthy that the daughter, a middle-aged woman, did not herself develop the complaint. Here, again, the disease ran a normal uncomplicated course, and ended in the perfect recovery of the patient. Both these old women were of the healthy, robust type, and each survived her unusual experience for several years.

DR. J. H. DREW (Weston-super-Mare) writes: It may be of interest to state that I have seen in the last few years three cases of measles in women aged 64, 68, and 55 respectively. The patient aged 64 was infected from a great-nephew, whom she had been nursing—eighteen days from rash to rash. She had a very profuse eruption, and ran a temperature of over 105° F. for four days, with severe bronchitis. The woman aged 68 was infected from children in the house, apparently from casual contact on the stairs; here again the attack was severe. The last case, in a woman of 55, occurred a few weeks ago, and was of a milder type, the temperature not exceeding 103.5°, and the bronchitis being slight.

VACANCIES.

NOTIFICATIONS of offices vacant in universities, medical colleges, and of vacant resident and other appointments at hospitals, will be found at pages 49, 50, 52, 53, 56, 57, and 58 of our advertisement columns, and advertisements as to partnerships, assistantships, and locumtenencies at pages 54 and 55.

A short summary of vacant posts notified in the advertisement columns appears in the *Supplement* at page 107.