

Letters, Notes, and Answers

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QUERIES AND ANSWERS

Plantar Corns

Dr. FRANCIS J. BAILDON (Southport) writes: The best abrasive for plantar corns and callosities is a piece of pumice-stone, choosing a piece which floats well in water. This should be rubbed on wet with plain or soapy water several times a week. If the plantar arches are down a support of stiffened leather, such as the "wizard" support, is lighter and more kindly to the foot than any metal support can be. Care should be given to the boots, which should be fitted so as not to cramp the foot, especially in width, and the upper surface of the sole upon which the foot rests must be examined as to freedom from cracks in the leather or inequalities of the surface, which are liable to be produced during wear. A change of boots daily is desirable, and finally, frequent washing of the feet.

Income Tax

Disability Pension

"Ex-M.O." has retired, and has been awarded a permanent disability pension. Will he be liable to pay tax on it?

** Yes; it is presumably paid to him in connexion with the pension scheme, to the funds of which he has made compulsorily contributions, and represents income to which he has acquired a legal right.

LETTERS, NOTES, ETC.

Anaesthetic Masks

Dr. F. O'SULLIVAN (Monmouthshire) writes: I note Mr. H. M. Page's letter in your issue of April 23rd, stating that before the war he devised a mask identical to the one published in the *British Medical Journal* on April 16th. As mentioned, I was not aware that an identical mask was already in existence. In consequence I do not claim priority as being the originator of this mask. I have since received an illustration of Mr. Page's inhaler from Messrs. Allen and Hanburys, and although the masks appear identical, there are a few differences—namely, the mask devised by Mr. Page is shallower than mine; the perforations inside the tubes also differ, in so far as mine extend almost the whole length of each tube; while in his model they are confined to the dome.

Dr. A. M. DUFF (honorary anaesthetist, Clayton Hospital, Wakefield) writes: In the *Journal* of April 16th, under Preparations and Appliances, Dr. F. O'Sullivan describes the anaesthetic mask which he has devised. I had a mask made for me two or three years ago somewhat similar in type. I brought the tubes from side to side, with perforations on either side of the middle line. It was made in this way in order that the rubber tubes from the cylinders might be brought in from the more convenient side. The mask was made by Mr. C. F. Thackray, Leeds.

Dr. O. R. L. WILSON (Streatham) writes: I would like to point out that my father, the late Dr. R. W. Wilson, medical superintendent of the Croydon Infirmary, used a similar appliance over twenty years ago, for use with a Junker's inhaler. In this mask, however, there was only one perforated metal tube, into the summit of which was inserted a Y-piece, to the ends of which were attached rubber tubes from the inhaler and from an oxygen cylinder.

Doctors and District Nurses

"NEST" writes: I fear that my original letter has been misconstrued. With over twenty-five years in my present area in extensive industrial practice, including Poor Law, and having passed through chairs both of my Division and Branch, I can claim to "deal faithfully" with my brethren in general practice in this matter. The relationship between doctor and nurse was not, directly at least, foremost in my mind. As to the futilities of local nursing committees, I sympathize with "A Devon G.P." I have "had some," but brought away three of their nurses to join me in the public sphere. Might I point out that the question is one concerning the patient. I cannot do better than quote from one of the highest rank in our Association, to whom I submitted the issue before writing to the *Journal*: "I entirely agree that medical men are not doing their duty by their patients who neglect to use a trained nurse in suitable cases when they have the chance."

Dr. H. E. BLOXSOME (Fairford, Gloucestershire) writes: As most of the letters have condemned district nurses I think it fair that Dr. Bartlett's views should be supported. In my practice there are five district nurses, and I have ample opportunity of judging their work. Without their help in dealing with innumerable minor ailments, and above all of relieving me of routine midwifery, which used to make the lives of my grandfather and father far less pleasant than mine, it would really be impossible to carry on a wide country practice. They probably make many mistakes, but I have never known them to make a serious one, and I have always found them a skilful and devoted class of women.

Medical Golf

Dr. WILBUR C. LOWRY (Blyth) writes: On Sunday, April 17th, the annual golf match of the Blyth Division of the British Medical Association took place. Ten members turned out. The weather was ideal and the afternoon most successful. Dr. Milne returned a score of 77 net (handicap 3), Dr. Gordon 78 net (handicap 16), Dr. Macauley 86 net (handicap 14). Dr. J. Brown and Dr. Lowry, who take this event as the occasion of their only game of the year, perhaps enjoyed the match more than anyone else. Dr. Brown scored 137, Dr. Lowry 138. Dr. Lowry, however, was one hole up at the end. Both claim the victory. The thanks of the Division are due to the golf secretary, Dr. C. Fairlie, for a very pleasant day.

Brain of the East African Native

Dr. NORMAN LEYS (formerly medical officer in Kenya and Nyasaland) writes: In your issue of March 26th Dr. J. H. Sequeira cites figures that have been published in East Africa which make it appear that the average weight of the brain of the natives of East Africa is less than it is in Europeans. As the weight of the brain in all races is known to vary with the weight of the whole body, and as, in the figures Dr. Sequeira cites, no correlation of brain with body weights has been made, they would seem to be of no value.

B. Aerogenes as an Index of Water Purity

Correction

Dr. J. D. ALLAN GRAY (Bacteriological Laboratories, University of Liverpool) writes: The abstract in the *Epitome* of April 16th (p. 72, No. 369) of a paper written by me states: "He finds that the use of modifications of the citrate medium, containing lithium or barium, is useful in the isolation of *B. aerogenes* when *B. pyocyaneus* is abundant. Little, if any, danger appears to accrue from ingesting the latter organism, even in large numbers." I should be grateful if you would correct this. As the original paper indicates, the sentence should run: "Little, if any, danger appears to accrue from ingesting *Bact. aerogenes*, even in large numbers."

Vacancies

Notifications of offices vacant in universities, medical colleges, and of vacant resident and other appointments at hospitals, will be found at pages 38, 39, 40, 41, 44, 45, and 46 of our advertisement columns, and advertisements as to partnerships, assistantships, and locumtenencies at pages 42 and 43.

A short summary of vacant posts notified in the advertisement columns appears in the *Supplement* at page 207.