

## Letters, Notes, and Answers

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### QUERIES AND ANSWERS

#### Nocturnal Incontinence of Urine

"DOCTORMAN" (Kingston) asks for suggestions for the treatment of nocturnal incontinence of urine, which has continued since infancy in a girl now aged 11½. She is of a somewhat nervous disposition, given to occasional nightmares and terrifying dreams, but otherwise healthy, bright, and intelligent, learns well at school, but no genius, good at sports and physical exercises, at carpentry, and things mechanical. A sound sleeper, she is habitually taken up at night, but seldom really awakens. Hexamine has sometimes been helpful.

#### Glycosuria and Incontinence

"G. N. M." (Gloucestershire) asks for information on the following case: In a man aged 54, rather stout, energetic, and abstemious, sugar was accidentally discovered in the urine six years ago when he was consulting a surgeon for occasional nocturnal incontinence. The glycosuria was promptly dispelled by the taking of herbs, obtained for rheumatism, and dieting. More interesting still is the fact that the herbs alone will do the same. I do not know what the herbs are. Occasionally the patient is drowsy. He puts on weight when he is not dieting. There is no polyuria or thirst; appetite is moderate. His only worry is the incontinence. The prostate is normal, as shown by cystoscope, urethroscope, and rectal examination. Wassermann reaction is negative; sugar tolerance curve is high. The urea is normal.

\* \* This would appear to be a typical case of mild diabetes in an obese and middle-aged man. Such cases are often non-progressive for some years, especially when periods of dieting are followed, as appears to happen in this case. It is very unusual, to say the least, for herbal treatment to have any effect on diabetes, and most doctors would require very complete and controlled proof before accepting this as a fact. It is not likely that the "incontinence" has any connexion with the glycosuria, unless it disappears when the urine becomes sugar-free on diet.

#### Case of ? Tuberculoma

Dr. L. M. CLARK (Jamaica) asks for suggestions in the treatment of a man, aged 29, who complains of severe headaches at frequent intervals, lasting one or two days. The only drug tried which has any effect is morphine (1/2 grain). In November, 1926, he was in bed for six weeks with irregular fever and severe headaches: he was then well for six months, and since then has had periodic attacks. In January, 1930, he had an operation in Panama for left frontal sinus, "done through the nose." In July, 1931, in England, he had a conservative operation for left frontal sinus. Pus was found, and three months later an x-ray of the skull was negative. Cerebro-spinal fluid—no record. He had an attack three weeks after the last frontal sinus operation. In August, 1931, a pulped stone in the left

upper wisdom was extracted. He was on reduced carbohydrate diet for two and a half months in 1931. Present condition: X-ray (September, 1932) shows opaque patches in midline near vertex of skull. Cerebro-spinal fluid—350 cells per c.mm., mostly small lymphocytes; pressure increased. Lung x-ray—one old calcified node. Provisional diagnosis—calcifying localized tuberculous meningitis.

#### Arteriosclerosis: Subjective Symptoms

Dr. LAWRIE (Shelton, Stoke-on-Trent), in reply to "Anxious," writes: I suggest that if the ears have not been examined this should be done. I had as a patient one old gentleman getting on towards 80 years of age who was suffering from "incurable" giddiness, supposed to be due to arteriosclerosis, and he was cured by syringing out two plugs of wax from his ears.

#### Income Tax

##### Allowance for Disused Car

"A. C." used one car up to 1924, and since then found two cars necessary. He has now reverted to one car only, and the inspector of taxes declines to make any obsolescence allowance for the discarded car because it has not been replaced. Depreciation on both cars was allowed up to 1931 inclusive. The obsolete car is unsaleable.

\* \* The inspector is legally correct, and if "A. C." does not intend to use two cars in future there is no means of obtaining the obsolescence allowance. If, however, there is a prospect of two cars being used again he might ask the inspector whether he will allow the claim in the year when a second car is purchased.

### LETTERS, NOTES, ETC.

#### Voluntary Sterilization

Dr. B. DUNLOP (London, S.W.) writes: I beg that, in view of what is said in two items (pp. 481 and 483), you will again allow me to demur to the proposal to legalize voluntary sterilization merely for mental defectives. As the mental deficiency evil is (1) mainly a "carrier" one, and (2) only part of the very serious phenomenon of transmissible defectiveness, the scientific as well as liberal procedure would be to make voluntary sterilization (and, I should add, abortion) by medical practitioners entirely legal or else legal for any person who has two children.

#### Caveat Emptor

Information that has reached us from Birmingham suggests that busy and preoccupied doctors ought to be on their guard against the blandishments of an itinerant canvasser who may try to get their signature to an order form for a high-sounding encyclopaedia in several volumes with "research privileges." The book and the "service" may or may not be worth the subscription; but whoever feels attracted by offers of this kind would do well to read the terms carefully before signing any document.

#### Number Plates and Brakes

Motorists are reminded by the Automobile Association of the importance of keeping their number plates "clearly distinguishable" as required by law. Numerous prosecutions for this offence have recently been instituted by the police in various parts of the country. A further point to which the police have recently devoted considerable attention is the maintenance of an efficient braking system, and frequent tests are being carried out. The usual procedure is for the driver to be asked to apply the brakes, and in the event of their not holding the sequel usually takes place at the local police court. The maximum penalty for both the infringements mentioned is £20.

#### "Endometriomata": Correction

Lieut.-Colonel V. B. GREEN-ARMYTAGE asks us to correct a slip which occurred in his article (*Journal*, April 8th, p. 602). "Partridge's egg"—column 2, line 12—should read "partridge's eye."

#### Vacancies

Notifications of offices vacant in universities, medical colleges, and of vacant resident and other appointments at hospitals, will be found at pages 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, and 51 of our advertisement columns, and advertisements as to partnerships, assistantships, and locumtenencies at pages 50 and 51.

A short summary of vacant posts notified in the advertisement columns appears in the *Supplement* at page 140.