

## Letters, Notes, and Answers

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### QUERIES AND ANSWERS

#### Dermatitis from Water Softeners

"J. N. T.," asking for information on this subject, writes: Has anyone experienced dermatitis resulting from the use of domestic water softeners, and is this likely to arise when the softener is acting efficiently or only when it has gone out of order? Could an excess of salt used in the process lead to the dermatitis?

#### Nasal Desiccators

"C. B. N." writes: In my part of the world, Portsmouth, it is a season of minor colds—a particularly distressing complaint during the brilliant weather we are enjoying. There are many new preparations on the market for drying up the nasal discharges at the source, and some of them are available to the public without prescription. Could anyone who has studied the question give an opinion as to whether this drying-up process is not very harmful to the mucous membrane of the nose and accessory parts?

#### Proteinuria in Pregnancy

Dr. ANDREW S. BARR (Glasgow) writes: I would like to add my experience to that of Dr. V. Newton (April 8th, p. 639), who asks about the significance of a heavy cloud that appears after heating the urine of pregnant women, but not until the acetic acid has been added. I have had three such cases in two years. Like Dr. Newton I could find little clue as to its significance in the literature, but, unlike his cases, all mine ran an abnormal course, with high blood pressure and pre-eclamptic symptoms. In all three, the condition cleared up a month or so after labour.

#### Nocturnal Incontinence of Urine

Dr. R. HASTINGS MOORE (Bristol), in reply to "Doctorman," writes: First of all do skin tests for common articles of diet, such as wheat, pork, tea, cabbage, fish, beef, etc., and also for feathers and sheep's wool. If any results are positive, remove the offending article from the child's diet or surroundings. Give 1/2 grain of ephedrine when the child goes to bed, and 1/2 grain when the parents go to bed. I have had several good results from treatment based on allergic principles.

#### Income Tax

##### Retirement from Practice

"J. L. M." retired from practice as at June 30th, 1932. On what basis should his liability be computed for his last three months?

\*\* If he was in sole practice the liability is on the actual amount of his earnings for that period of three months. If, however, he was in partnership, the answer depends on whether the whole of the individuals con-

cerned—that is, partners immediately before and after June 30th, 1932—combine to elect to have the practice treated as having ceased and recommenced *de novo* at that date. If they so elect, then "J. L. M." is in the same position as if he carried on a sole practice; if they do not, then no change in basis occurs, because the practice is continuous, the 1932-3 liability is determined by the 1931-2 earnings, and "J. L. M.'s" one-quarter is affected accordingly.

#### Payments to Dispenser

"PERPLEXED" employs a lady dispenser at £3 10s. per week, and usually pays her an additional £3 at midsummer and £5 at Christmas. How should these additional payments be regarded?

\*\* They are paid for services rendered and are liable to assessment in the dispenser's hands. Consequently they should be treated by "Perplexed" as professional expenses, and returned by him on the Form 46 as remuneration.

### LETTERS, NOTES, ETC.

#### Turpentine Idiosyncrasy

Dr. C. J. B. BUCHAN (London, S.E.12), in reference to Dr. W. W. Jeudwine's case reported in the *Journal* of March 25th (p. 513), writes to say he had a similar case in 1932: The patient, a young woman aged 29 years, sustained a sprain of the left ankle on April 26th, 1932. Two days later lin. terebinth. was used to rub her ankle. She was able to walk on May 12th, when some blebs appeared over the ankle. A vesicular eruption rapidly spread up the leg and thigh, and appeared on the right leg and thigh and both arms and forearms. The blisters were very large and the limbs became swollen, red, hot, and painful. Lot. calamin. was first prescribed, then 10 per cent. resorcin lotion, but without good results. On May 20th lot. calamin. + ichthylol was used, but the eruption remained until June 17th, when she was able to resume her work as a clerk. Her general condition remained good all the time. The skin healed, but was not perfectly normal until six weeks after the appearance of the eruption.

#### Experimental Shock

Mr. J. E. R. McDONAGH (London, W.1), in the course of a letter referring to Professor McDowall's Arris and Gale Lecture on experimental shock, published in the *British Medical Journal* of April 22nd (p. 690), writes: My experimental work of recent years has thrown light on the subject sufficient to enable me to devote a chapter to it in the second number of *The Nature of Disease Journal*, which is now in the press.

#### A Warning

Dr. EDITH HARRIS (*née* Abbott) asks us to publish a warning, with description, of a woman who has been impersonating her recently, describing herself as "Dr. Edith Abbott, medical officer of health in the L.C.C. Education Service." She is 5 ft. 6 in. in height, usually wears a black tailor-made coat and skirt in strict masculine style, and has a grey felt hat with a feather at the side. She wears pince-nez, has fair, bobbed hair and a thin face, usually wears a shirt blouse and red tie, grey stockings, and black patent shoes. She has been frequenting the Chelsea and the West Central areas.

#### Corrigenda

We are asked to draw attention to the fact that a house-surgeon (male) is wanted at the Bradford Royal Infirmary from June 1st to November 30th, not July 1st to November 30th, as stated in the advertisement which appeared last week.

An obvious misprint in the *Epilome* of March 25th, para. 232, which dealt with *Br. abortus* in milk, recorded the pasteurization temperatures as Centigrade instead of Fahrenheit.

#### Vacancies

Notifications of offices vacant in universities, medical colleges, and of vacant resident and other appointments at hospitals, will be found at pages 40, 41, 42, 43, 46, and 47 of our advertisement columns, and advertisements as to partnerships, assistantships, and locumtenencies at pages 44 and 45.

A short summary of vacant posts notified in the advertisement columns appears in the *Supplement* at page 191.