

British Medical Journal

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TAVISTOCK SQUARE
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ORIGINAL ARTICLES and LETTERS forwarded for publication are understood to be offered to the *British Medical Journal* alone, unless the contrary be stated. Correspondents who wish notice to be taken of their communications should authenticate them with their names, not necessarily for publication.

Authors desiring REPRINTS of their articles published in the *British Medical Journal* must communicate with the Financial Secretary and Business Manager, British Medical Association House, Tavistock Square, W.C.1, on receipt of proofs. Authors over-seas should indicate on MSS. if reprints are required, as proofs are not sent abroad.

All communications with reference to ADVERTISEMENTS, as well as orders for copies of the *Journal*, should be addressed to the Financial Secretary and Business Manager.

The **TELEPHONE NUMBER** of the British Medical Association and the *British Medical Journal* is EUSTON 2111 (internal exchange, five lines).

The **TELEGRAPHIC ADDRESSES** are
EDITOR OF THE BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL, Aitiology Westcent, London.

FINANCIAL SECRETARY AND BUSINESS MANAGER
(Advertisements, etc.), *Articulate Westcent, London.*

MEDICAL SECRETARY, Medisecra Westcent, London.

The address of the B.M.A. Scottish Office is 7, Drumshough Gardens, Edinburgh (telegrams: *Associate, Edinburgh*; telephone: 24361 Edinburgh), and of the Office of the Irish Free State Medical Union (I.M.A. and B.M.A.), 18, Kildare Street, Dublin (telegrams: *Bacillus, Dublin*; telephone: 62550 Dublin).

QUERIES AND ANSWERS

Coaching for First M.B.

"A. B." asks: Can anyone give information as to whether there are in existence "coach classes" for students going up for the First M.B. examinations such as there are for the Fellowship examination? Public schools do not appear to cater for this examination, and parents might consider the advisability of sending their sons to such classes for the special purpose of the examination.

Elimination of Fruit Acids

"A. R." (Ceylon) asks whether the acids in such fruits as oranges and limes turn to citrates in the body, and in the process of elimination in the urine tend to render it somewhat alkaline.

Priapism after Pruritus Ani

Dr. CHEVERS (Manchester) writes in answer to the query *re* priapism (*Journal*, December 21st, 1935, p. 1240): Intensive and prolonged treatment, general and local, for the rheumatic diathesis might be effective.

Income Tax

Replacement of Car: Private Use

"G.P." has in the past claimed £115 for the expense of running a car, which has been allowed subject to a deduction of £20 a year for private use. No depreciation claim was made, and he is now claiming £169 in respect of cost of replacement of the car. The inspector of taxes desires to exclude £24 of the £169 as relating to private use.

** The question is really one of fact—that is, was £20 per annum sufficient to cover the whole of the cost attributable to private use—annual depreciation as well as running cost? Probably our correspondent has nothing from which he can prove the inclusion of depreciation as an element of the £20. In that case the inspector of taxes has the rather strong ground that as a proportion of the running cost must be excluded the same principle must be followed as regards other costs, including replacement cost.

Allowance for Car

"F. G." purchased a new car in 1927 for £325 (depreciated value at December, 1934, £51) and sold it in 1935 for £90, buying another car for £288. What should he claim?

** (a) Obsolescence allowance £51 - £30 = £21, which ranks as an expense of the year 1935, and therefore affects the tax payable for 1936-7; and (b) depreciation for 1936-7 on £288.

LETTERS, NOTES, ETC.

New Year Honours: Addendum

The name of Mr. Robert McLean Gibson, F.R.C.S., who receives the M.B.E. (Civil Division), was omitted from the New Year Honours List published in our last issue at page 26.

Urine as a Remedy

Dr. F. PARKES WEBER writes: I am much interested in the confirmatory statement of Dr. E. Idris Jones and Dr. C. V. Mackay's reference to the late Colonel Lawrence's *Seven Pillars of Wisdom* regarding the possible therapeutic use of fresh, warm urine. One need scarcely refer to the use of urine in physiological and pathological studies of the sex hormones, as illustrated by the Aschheim-Zondek test, etc. Many more discoveries of importance of an analogous kind are likely to be made by the help of urine and the substances excreted in it. It is also worth recalling that human urine once had a definite commercial and industrial value. Among some coins and coin-like tokens which I gave to the British Museum in 1906 was a seventeenth or eighteenth century copper piece, evidently a kind of check for the receipt of a certain quantity of human urine, which was used by fullers and for dyeing. I have heard that in China a visitor, after being entertained to tea, used, before leaving the house, to micturate in a vessel, so that his urine could be employed by his host's household for some such purpose as dyeing. The urine of pregnant women was not long ago sold by a large maternity hospital for the manufacture of prolan.

Dr. T. GERALD GARRY writes from Cairo: I have been interested in Dr. Parkes Weber's remarks concerning urine as a therapeutic agent (December 14th, 1935, p. 1179). Urine is still very commonly used in folk-medicine—for instance, the Australian natives use the urine of the opposite sex as a cure for sickness. In Ancient Egypt the excrements of animals were regarded as very important therapeutic remedies. Indeed, many of the ancient remedies are employed by the Arabs at the present day with equal success. This refers especially to urine, which is believed to possess special virtues in the case of many disease conditions. In this connexion it is of peculiar interest to mention that the fellaheen have a proverb handed down from remote antiquity which is frequently used to express their superlative idea of meanness, by referring to a man as "so mean that he would not micturate on the sick finger of a friend."

A County Dental Journal

We have received a copy of the first issue of the *West Riding Dental Journal*. This is an ambitious and indeed courageous enterprise on the part of the West Riding dental staff. So far as we know it is the first of its kind in the country. Already it must fulfil an undoubted need, and it seems probable that in the future it will find an even wider sphere of usefulness. No. 1 includes a series of abstracts from the reports of other county authorities and from the various dental journals. Almost every aspect of modern dentistry, from propaganda to pulpotomy, is touched upon. Some amusing figures are included on the use of the toothbrush in Germany. In the future it is hoped to include articles by members of the dental staff of the West Riding on administrative and clinical matters, and there is room, too, for communications from doctors, teachers, county councillors, and, in fact, almost anyone who has an interest in public dentistry. We wish this venture the success it deserves.

Plaster Technique

We have received a copy of *Cellona Technique*, a handbook published by the makers of "cellona" plaster-of-Paris bandages (T. J. Smith and Nephew Limited, Neptune Street, Hull). After an interesting historical survey of the treatment of fractures the detailed technique of plaster preparation and fixation is described. The work follows the teaching of Böhler, and concludes with a note on veterinary technique. It is well documented and profusely illustrated.

Vacancies

Notifications of offices vacant in universities, medical colleges, and of vacant resident and other appointments at hospitals, will be found at pages 54, 55, 56, 57, 60, and 61 of our advertisement columns, and advertisements as to partnerships, assistantships, and locumtenencies at pages 58 and 59. A short summary of vacant posts notified in the advertisement columns appears in the *Supplement* at page 20.