

British Medical Journal

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JANUARY 18, 1936



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Fees for Anaesthetics in Dental Treatment.
Association Notices; Vacancies and Appointments; Diary.

AN EPITOME OF CURRENT MEDICAL LITERATURE will be found at the end of the JOURNAL

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All communications in regard to editorial business should be addressed to **The EDITOR, British Medical Journal, B.M.A. House, Tavistock Square, W.C.1.**

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, Aitology 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, Drumsheugh 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

Treatment of Dipsomania

"M.D." writes: I would be glad to have suggestions for the treatment of a man of 36, married, with two children, who for the past few years has been subject to attacks of dipsomania, occurring about every eight or nine weeks and lasting anything from a few days to a fortnight. During this period he drinks nothing but whisky, in quantity up to two bottles a day. In the intervals he is very abstemious, but during the attacks he is quite incapable of work, though normally he is a very alert business man. His father was subject to similar attacks, which, however, were of shorter duration, came on later in life, and did not incapacitate him for so long. I saw this patient in the middle of his last attack, and gave him grain 1/10 of apomorphine hypodermically, repeated on two occasions, without, however, causing any nausea or distaste for alcohol. In fact, I felt his craving was aggravated thereby. He slept for some hours, and wakened with an increased desire, but eventually settled under large doses of chloral and bromides. I would be glad to have suggestions: (1) to arrest the craving at the commencement of an attack, or (2) in the course of an attack. He is not suitable for institutional treatment in view of his abstemious intervals, and in any case he would not consent to this. Physically his condition is normal, apart from the usual effects of alcohol.

Psoriasis of the Scalp

Dr. HORACE ROSE (Wendover) asks for advice as to the treatment of a chronic but mild case of psoriasis of the scalp in a female patient aged 40. The usual remedies have been tried.

Income Tax

Official Quarters in Institution

"M. S." inquires as to the position of the official and the institution in the matter of income tax.

** Where quarters are assigned to an official rent free and he is not permitted to sublet them the value of the benefit so received—that is, the equivalent of the rent, rates, and any other advantages supplied—is not assessable (Schedule E) on the official in accordance with the old rule laid down in *Tennant v. Smith*. On the other hand, if the official receives a gross salary less a deduction for rent, etc., he is liable on the gross and not on the net amount payable to him—*Osborn v. Swyer*. As regards the institution, the governing body is liable to assessment under Schedule A on the whole building (including the official quarters), unless it is exempt as a charitable body. In that case, however, the exemption does not apply to any portion occupied by an individual officer whose total income amounts to £150—Income Tax Act, 1918, Schedule A, No. vi, Rule 1 (c).

LETTERS, NOTES, ETC.

The Quintuplets and their Doctor

On May 28th, 1934, Mrs. Elzire Dionne, a young French-Canadian living in a settlement two hundred miles north of Lake Ontario, gave birth to five living girls. Dr. Allan Roy Dafoe of Callander arrived during the birth of two of the infants, but was present during the delivery of the remaining three, and took charge of the whole situation. He contributed a graphic account of the event to the *Journal of the American Medical Association* of September 1st, 1934, and this was briefly summarized in our issue of



September 22nd. The history of the five babies, ever since their birth "got into the papers," has been a subject of world-wide publicity. Dr. Dafoe, who received the O.B.E. in the Silver Jubilee Honours List, has been kind enough to send us, as a Christmas and New Year card, a charming photograph in colours of the "quins" and their doctor at play on the nursery floor, and we think that a good many readers will like to see a small reproduction of this happy domestic interior or conversation piece.

Urine as a Remedy

Dr. DAVID RORIE (Aberdeen) writes: Forty years ago, in the "Kingdom" of Fife, urine was frequently employed as a remedial application for the cure of "rose" (erysipelas), and a child's wet napkin was used often to wipe out the mouth and fauces of a sufferer from "thrush." Dan McKenzie, in *The Infancy of Medicine*, mentions that one of the stock drugs of the ancient Hindus was decomposing urine, and, although it has never come under my own observation, I have been told by patients of cases where the sufferer's own urine was taken as a remedy for "bladder trouble" and gonorrhoea.

Dr. ENID A. WILLIAMS writes: I knew an old Anglesey lady, a farmer's daughter born in 1835, who always kept a crock of sour urine in her garden. When washing flannels she used to mix about a pint of this with the water. Her flannels never shrunk, and were always soft. If a cow had paid a visit to a bull without becoming pregnant, she would blame her husband for refusing to give the animal a dose of the sour urine immediately on its return, stating that it was a never-failing remedy for sterile mating. Of course the urine from her crock was ordinary mixed urine. Warm fresh urine was a well-known remedy for chapped hands, about thirty years ago, amongst the lower classes.

Warning to Hospitals

Dr. SIDNEY CLARKE (St. Albans) writes: I would advise hospitals to beware of a man coming in as a casual and asking for immediate treatment, as an in-patient, for renal colic. Probably he will demand a private ward, and he may say that he is a Canadian. He has two scars in the right loin, one in the left, and there is one over the appendix region. He has tattoo marks on his arms, gives well-known names as references, and actually he has no means. He is a humbug, and wants simply a night's good board and lodging.

Vacancies

Notifications of offices vacant in universities, medical colleges, and of vacant resident and other appointments at hospitals, will be found at pages 50, 51, 52, 53, 56, and 57 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 32.