

British Medical Journal

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- Association Notices; Vacancies and Appointments; Diary.

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DAY of PUBLIC MOURNING: TUESDAY, JANUARY 28th

Owing to the fact that the Office of the British Medical Journal will be closed on this day we wish to ask our Advertisers and others to co-operate by forwarding advertisements and communications for our issue of February 1st to reach this House by first post on Monday next.

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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, 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

Dr. G. M. TORRANCE (Staffordshire) writes: In reply to "M.D." (*Journal*, January 18th, p. 142), I would like to suggest that, unless his dipsomaniac is willing and anxious to undergo treatment in order to be cured, all efforts will be unavailing. I would further suggest that institutional treatment is highly desirable. Any misapprehension regarding an institution could be allayed by reading W. Seabrook's *Asylum*, which is a true and encouraging statement of fact.

Income Tax

Assistant M.O.H.—Expenses

"P. W." is in the Government service and receives a salary of £500 a year. Can he deduct as expenses (a) professional subscriptions, (b) fees for examination course and for the examination itself, and (c) the excess of the cost (including depreciation) of his car over the amount received on a basis of 1½d. per mile?

** (a) Only if membership of the societies in question is required as a condition of his appointment. (b) No. They represent capital outlay incurred to improve his professional ability and prospects. (c) He is legally entitled to the deduction of the excess of the amount expended "wholly, exclusively, and necessarily in the performance of the duties of his office" over the amount received, but as this amounts to having to prove that the allowance is insufficient it is in practice seldom, if ever, that such a claim succeeds.

Disposition in favour of child

"W." refers to a note in the *Journal* of October 19th last, and inquires how he would benefit by making a voluntary disposition in favour of his child, aged 3. The only income of the child is the interest on a small Post Office account. For 1935-6 "W." will pay tax on the sum of £293.

** If "W." enters into a legally binding agreement to pay, say, £45 per annum to trustees for the benefit of his child he can deduct tax at the standard rate from the £45, and can then reclaim the tax from the Revenue as the natural guardian of the child. It is essential that "W." should have no power of revocation of the deed without the consent of some one other than his wife or himself. Further, the grant of the income to the child must be expressed to be for the life of the child. The cost to "W." (apart from preparation of the necessary deed and stamp) will be represented by the loss of the earned income relief on £45—that income having been made legally the income of the child it ceases to be the earned income of "W."

LETTERS, NOTES, ETC.

Drug Habit, Anaesthesia, and High Blood Pressure

Lieut.-Colonel HENRY SMITH, C.I.E., I.M.S.(ret.), writes: With reference to your annotation on hypertension in the *Journal* of January 18th (p. 118) a few clinical facts not commonly known might be of interest to those investigating this subject from the experimental point of view. A drug habit once established is never lost, however long the habitué totally abstains from his drug. I early learned that the easy method of chloroforming a chronic liquor drinker is to give him a dose of whisky sufficient to make him "jolly" an hour before anaesthetization, after which he takes chloroform as easily and smoothly as a baby, and requires very little of it. I have had exactly similar experiences with opium eaters after long years of total abstinence from the drug. The habit for these drugs, and I presume others too, once acquired, seems in this respect to be never lost. With regard to high blood pressure, a fact which I think is hardly appreciated by the profession is that nux vomica eating is very prevalent in India, and that those addicted to it are frequently the subjects of cerebral haemorrhage at and under the age of 40. They have gone through the whole gamut of high blood pressure. They are well-to-do and indulge in sexual excess to such a degree that their sexual powers begin to flag very early in life, and hence the habit. Nux vomica raises the blood pressure, and when taken regularly establishes the blood pressure habit. A pressor endocrine poured in very small quantity into the blood for some time in excess of normal could, on the principle of the drugs above noted, establish a state of hypertension, even though after a few years no excess is to be found in the blood.

Calcium Sulphide in Septic Conditions

Dr. W. LEES TEMPLETON (London, N.7) writes: The use of calcium sulphide in the prophylaxis and treatment of sepsis in the puerperium as reported in the *Journal* of November 30th is interesting, in view of the fact that this drug, as "hepar sulph." is a well-known and useful drug in the homoeopathic materia medica, and is, of course, frequently indicated in septic but most often, in our experience, in staphylococcal rather than in streptococcal infections. It is of further interest also that it has been shown by measurement of the opsonic index to raise the resistance of the healthy to staphylococci when given in small doses, and to lower the resistance if given in larger doses. This was confirmed independently of laboratory findings by the famous Dr. Ringer, who claimed that the drug when given in small doses tended to check suppuration, and when given in larger doses to encourage it.

A Warning

A man who has been obtaining money under false pretences from medical practitioners in London is wanted by the Criminal Investigation Departments of Marylebone Lane Police Station (Welbeck 2824) and Bow Street Police Station (Temple Bar 6400). His usual technique is to claim acquaintanceship, either with the practitioner himself or with a friend whom he names, and then he explains that he is in town with his wife but has unfortunately forgotten to take sufficient ready cash with him. He then asks for a loan of one pound or two pounds. He is described by various names and various military titles. His age is 63, height 5 ft. 8½ in., grey eyes, white hair, white waxed military moustache, complexion ruddy and bloated, and he is of a stiff build and military appearance. He was last seen wearing a dark overcoat, bowler hat, spats, and a bow tie, and he occasionally affects a small imperial beard. He is very plausible, and usually speaks of his old school. Should any of our readers receive a visit from this person they would be well advised to detain him under some pretext and inform the police.

Corrigendum

Messrs. H. K. Lewis and Co. Ltd. ask us to state that the authors of the *Guide to Human Parasitology* (reviewed in our issue of January 18th, p. 114) should have been given as BLACKLOCK and SOUTHWELL, and not Blackwell as printed. Also the price is 12s. 6d., not 13s. 6d.

Vacancies

Notifications of offices vacant in universities, medical colleges, and of vacant resident and other appointments at hospitals, will be found at pages 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, and 56 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 40.