

be a course in English of systematic training in neurology and psychiatry at Professor Wagner von Jauregg's neuropsychiatric clinic and at the Neurological Institute of Professor Marburg, under the auspices of the American Medical Association of Vienna. Further information may be obtained from Dr. E. Spiegel, Falkstrasse 3, Vienna I.

THE International Labour Office has published five more leaflets, Nos. 129 to 133, dealing with noises, the timber industry, explosives, metal grinding and polishing, and radium and radio-active substances. They may be obtained from the director of the London office of this organization, 12, Victoria Street, S.W.1.

THE first International Hospital Congress will be held at Atlantic City, U.S.A., from June 12th to 19th, 1929, and will be attended by hospital doctors, nurses, superintendents, architects, and engineers. The subscription is five dollars. Further information can be obtained from Dr. René Sand, 2, Avenue Velasquez, Paris.

THE nineteenth congress of the Italian Phreniatric Society will be held at Ferrara in 1929, when the following subjects will be discussed: temperament and character in psychiatry, introduced by Montesano and Kolylnsky; and fresh problems in psychiatry, with special reference to mental hygiene, introduced by Beranini, Modena, and Tumati.

BERLIN had a slight excess of deaths over births in 1926, and the excess was greater in 1927, when the total number of births was 42,696 and of deaths 48,742. Owing, however, to the excess of immigrants over emigrants, who amounted to 81,132 last year, the city continues to grow.

THE centenary of the foundation of the Psychiatric Institute of Palermo, of which Professor Giovanni Dotto has been the director for the last thirty years, has recently been celebrated.

PROFESSOR ADOLF WINDAUS of Göttingen, the discoverer of ergosterin, has been awarded the 1928 Nobel prize for chemistry.

## Letters, Notes, and Answers.

All communications in regard to editorial business should be addressed to **THE EDITOR, British Medical Journal, British Medical Association 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.

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 NUMBERS of the British Medical Association and the *British Medical Journal* are MUSEUM 9861, 9862, 9863, and 9864 (internal exchange, four lines).

THE TELEGRAPHIC ADDRESSES are:

EDITOR of the *British Medical Journal*, *Atiology Westcent, London*.

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

MEDICAL SECRETARY, *Medisecra Westcent, London*.

The address of the Irish Office of the British Medical Association is 16, South Frederick Street, Dublin (telegrams: *Bacillus, Dublin*; telephone: 62550 Dublin), and of the Scottish Office, 7, Drumsheugh Gardens, Edinburgh (telegrams: *Associate, Edinburgh*; telephone 24361 Edinburgh).

## QUERIES AND ANSWERS.

### TREATMENT OF MEMBRANOUS COLITIS.

"A COUNTRY DOCTOR" asks for suggestions for the treatment of a long-standing case of membranous colitis in a woman aged 33. Repeated doses of castor oil by mouth and olive oil and plain water enemata give relief, but only temporarily. All forms of dieting suggested have been tried, including one of milk and bananas only. The attacks usually last four to five weeks; they are followed by eight to ten days of good health, and recurrence ensues without apparent cause. The patient is otherwise fit and not of a neurotic type.

### INCOME TAX.

#### Obsolescence Allowance.

"J. C." refers to a reply to an inquiry from him which appeared in our issue of November 10th (p. 878), and encloses the inspector's reply to his further communications.

\* \* The inspector has referred the point to his headquarters, and the Inland Revenue Department evidently intend to stand

firm on the strict verbal construction of the rule—that is, in the case of an obsolescence claim regard can be had only to "the cost of the car replaced," even when that represented a temporary falling off in the standard of car equipment of the practice. The result in such circumstances is inequitable, except that the depreciation allowance, which can be simultaneously claimed, will restore the equity over a period of years. We cannot advise "J. C." to carry the matter further.

## LETTERS, NOTES, ETC.

### THE CIVIL POPULATION AND CHEMICAL WARFARE.

DR. F. R. HUMPHREYS (Wokingham) has prepared for the use of the St. John Ambulance Association a pamphlet on the *Protection of the Civil Population in Chemical Warfare*, which has received the approval of the Chemical Warfare Research Department at the War Office. The pamphlet, which is of a practical nature, discusses the protection rendered by gas-tight rooms, and the first-aid measures for gassed or wounded civilians. Interesting information is given about the way in which ground, houses, food, and clothing may be contaminated by poison gas, and details of decontamination processes are supplied. Although it is not easy to anticipate all the various difficult conditions which would result from gas attacks on large towns, yet this pamphlet can be recommended to the attention of medical practitioners who would in such circumstances find themselves faced by exacting duties and puzzling situations. The pamphlet (price 3d.) may be obtained from the St. John Ambulance Association, St. John's Gate, Clerkenwell, E.C.1.

### SODIUM NUCLEINATE AND PNEUMONIA.

DR. S. A. MONTGOMERY (Cleethorpes) writes: Having seen the virtues of sodium nucleinate praised from time to time by contributors to the *British Medical Journal*, I tried it in one of my own patients, in the hope that it might shorten a lobar pneumonia and possibly prevent an empyema from developing. The first injection of 3/4 grain was given about twenty-four hours from the onset, and then similar amounts at four-hour intervals till 3 grains in all had been injected. Morphine and strychnine 1/60 grain were also given for the first three or four nights, to ensure rest and sleep. Far from there being an early crisis, even at the end of eleven days there was no sign of the temperature falling to normal. The patient's condition began rapidly to deteriorate, with marked falling off of appetite, a spasmodic coughing, and retching, yet no purulent material appeared in the sputum. The presence of pus in the pleural cavity was not confirmed by needling various interspaces with a long serum needle. As the patient's condition was growing steadily worse, a rib was resected; on opening into the pleural cavity several adhesions were found, but still no pus, so it was decided to insert a drain and leave it. After another three days purulent material poured out through the tube, the temperature rapidly fell to normal, and the condition quickly improved. Dr. Muir of Hull, who saw the patient, agreed that it was a case of interlobar empyema. The patient was a strong athletic man, aged 40, and in perfect health prior to the onset of pneumonia.

### THE CAMPAIGN AGAINST TUBERCULOSIS.

DR. A. W. CRAWFORD (Bolton) writes: In your report on October 20th (p. 714) of the Conference of the National Association for the Prevention of Tuberculosis I noticed that the American Indian suffered from tuberculosis in epidemic form, but there was no word about the origin or how the bacillus was propagated. This was surely an opportunity lost. We have not yet found any means by which the disease, once established, can be eradicated, so that all our methods of treatment are simply tentative. I suggest that the following points should receive some attention. Do human beings pass on the disease from one to another? Do the lower animals do so? Do human beings transmit the disease to the lower animals? Do the lower animals return it to the human? To settle these points, in my opinion, would be a step towards the elucidation of the problem. Our present methods are like plucking the leaves off a tree and allowing the tree to grow.

### 1929 MOTOR LICENCES.

To assist motorists the Automobile Association has issued a book, *Your Motor Tax at a Glance*, which shows the amounts due for licences, according to horse-power, either for the year or shorter periods. Information is also given concerning rebates obtainable in respect of old cars, refunds for surrendered licences, and the procedure for renewing licences. It is well to remember that the authorities are granting fourteen days' grace for the renewal of licences, and that vehicles used during this period of grace become liable to taxation. Copies of the booklet may be obtained upon application by postcard to the Secretary, the Automobile Association, Panum House, New Coventry Street, W.1, or to any of the A.A. area offices.

### VACANCIES.

NOTIFICATIONS of offices vacant in universities, medical colleges, and of vacant resident and other appointments at hospitals, will be found at pages 34, 36, 37, 39, and 40 of our advertisement columns, and advertisements as to partnerships, assistantships, and locumtenencies at pages 38 and 39.

A short summary of vacant posts notified in the advertisement columns appears in the *Supplement* at page 280.