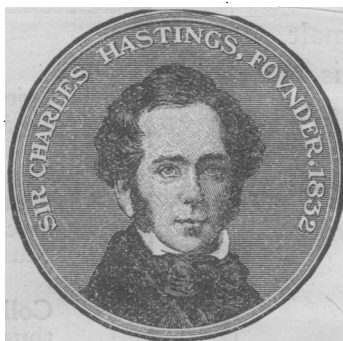


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in dread of punishment or disgrace. Nervous children will often entirely conceal such feelings. Personally I should not give any of the drugs mentioned. I find *Isacen* suitable for children, and they like the small size of the tablets. One may be taken each night.

"J. R. D." writes: My elder son, now aged 10, began to have fairly severe constipation at the age of 1½ to 2 years; he passed enormous hard stools if the bowels had not been open for a day or two, and even with daily motions the stools were very large, and it was difficult to correct this condition. Great care has been taken to go to stool at fixed hours, but paraffin and sometimes also syrup of figs have had to be continued daily. When 1 to 2 years old he passed several times a more or less complete bowel cast. He still takes about three drachms of paraffin daily, and passes one stool each day; not nearly so large in comparison as formerly. About once a week there is no evacuation, and then the laxative syrup is given in addition. The only real point of interest is that he is slowly "growing out of it." He is active and on the highly strung side. He was a nervous infant, awakening at a sound, and some years ago was for a long period subject to acidosis attacks. These are now prevented by alkaline draughts, given at the first warning. My other boy is quite normal in disposition and habits.

Cyanosis with Collapse.

DR. T. H. WIGNALL (Manchester), replying to the inquiry of Dr. L. R. Lemprière on November 15th (p. 876) about his case of cyanosis with collapse, writes: In my capacity of works surgeon to the British Dyestuffs, Blackley, I have seen many cases of acute aniline poisoning, and the case so clearly described by Dr. Lemprière strongly suggests acute "anilism." The boy was treated quite properly for the condition and recovered, as these cases, when not too severe, do. I think arsenic cannot be blamed. In any future case I should advise examination of blood for methaemoglobin, and, as a preventive precaution, I should advise boys not to get paint colours in the mouth or on the hands. I do not think any medicinal form of aniline derivatives had been taken in this case. Acetanilide has produced similar results in susceptible persons, and recovery without detriment usually occurs.

"R. C." writes in reply to Dr. L. R. Lemprière's inquiry: The case seems to be one of methaemoglobinæmia (or sulpho-haemoglobinæmia). Vide Saville's *System of Clinical Medicine*, fifth edition, p. 38.

Income Tax.

Assessment of Nursing Home.

"X. X." has been in surgical practice for some years, and in April, 1929, commenced a surgical home as an adjunct to his practice. The consulting room and x-ray room are on the same premises. The inspector of taxes claims to treat the home as a separate matter, which will adversely affect his income tax liability, and an appeal to the Commissioners has been lodged.

* * * The matter is not free from doubt, and a decision will to some extent turn on the precise facts of the case, but on the whole we think that the inspector has the stronger legal position. The "home" is in the nature of a business run in connexion with a practice, and some of the distinguishing marks of a profession are not present in the ownership and management of a "home." The two do not necessarily constitute a single unit of assessment because they are under the same control and ownership, and carried on in the same premises. The profits of a business are assessable under a different "case" of Schedule D from those of a profession, and on the facts the "home" may properly be held to be a "business" managed and owned by a professional man.

Cash Basis.

"TAY" bought a practice as from August 1st, 1929, and is, of course, assessable in respect of the year 1929-30 on the amount of the profits of the practice for the period from August 1st, 1929, to April 5th, 1930. Can he claim to calculate his gross income at the amount of his cash receipts?

* * * No; the correct basis is the amount of the cash receipts plus the amount of the outstanding debts as at April 5th, 1930, but after taking off that sum a carefully estimated allowance for bad debts. It will be realized that in such circumstances the adoption of the cash basis would mean deducting eight months' expenses from the equivalent of five or six months' gross income. The cash basis is legitimate only when the cash receipts for the earlier years fairly counterbalance that part of the year's bookings which are uncollected at the end of the year.

Radium Needles: Allowance for Exhaustion.

"Y. Z."s firm has about £1,000 worth of radium in needles, and has claimed 25 per cent. wear and tear allowance for income tax purposes on the ground that as used the life of the needles is not more than four years. The inspector of taxes declines to allow depreciation, and points out that replacement expenditure can be allowed when the needles are renewed.

* * * The inspector is probably correct in refusing the depreciation allowance, because that is applicable only to "plant and machinery," a phrase that implies something substantial, and

having moving parts suffering wear and tear by friction, etc. The replacement allowance applies to loose tools, implements, etc., and, on the whole, does seem to cover such apparatus as radium needles rather more appropriately. But the result of waiting for the allowance of replacement expenditure—if and when the needles are renewed—imposes a clear hardship, and "Y. Z." is justified in not yielding up his contention without a struggle. An alternative contention which appeals to us as more capable of sound argument would be somewhat as follows: Both the provisions so far discussed relate to assets which in themselves are permanent, but which suffer wear and tear in use, and the distinction does not work unfairly provided that the "tools" are individually comparatively inexpensive, which is normally the case. Radium needles, however, are different in their nature, in that they have in any case a limited effective life. In this they are analogous to "consumable stores"—such as stocks of material, coal, contractors' equipment, etc.—the practice with regard to which is to estimate the amount consumed for each respective contract or over the year's working. On that line of approach an allowance might be claimed, not as "wear and tear," but as the amount "consumed," it being understood that when renewal does take place an allowance shall be given of the replacement cost, less the sums allowed in respect of past "consumption."

LETTERS, NOTES, ETC.

Diet and Efficiency of Field Labourers.

In an article reprinted from *Tropical Agriculture* (vol. vii, No. 2, p. 40) Dr. E. A. Seagar, professor of hygiene and sanitation, Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture, gives a preliminary account of an investigation into various influences adversely affecting the efficiency of agricultural labourers in Trinidad, with especial reference to diet, health, fatigue, and psychological factors. The inquiry began a few years ago, and included a systematic collection of dietetic and medical records of about 800 East and West Indian labourers on sugar and cacao estates, which was undertaken partly to establish a correlation between diet and disease. Among the general results of the survey the dietary of the East Indian labourer appears to be superior in some respects to that of the West Indian, especially in sugar plantations, where the dietary statistics are stated to be consistently better. In both groups, however, the staple articles of diet—namely, rice, white flour, salt fish, and Irish potatoes—were found to be deficient in fats, proteins, and vitamins. The native workers apparently prefer to buy imported and tinned foods rather than cultivate more nutritious products at home. Health statistics revealed that a large number of labourers had marked cardiovascular degeneration, which reached an acute stage by the age of 40. This condition is thought to be definitely related to faulty diet and excessive consumption of tobacco and spirits. Some evidence was also obtained that deficiency of vitamin A was chiefly responsible for bronchial asthma and for some of the conjunctival affections among the East Indians. The percentage incidences of various diseases, such as ankylostomiasis, malaria, and syphilis, are represented diagrammatically, but the value of the figures is limited by the fact that they were based only on obvious clinical manifestations. While the investigators recognize that physical and climatic conditions may lower resistance and indirectly weaken the will to work, they consider that much could be done by instruction in healthy habits of living and by the general adoption of a suitable dietary. A more tentative suggestion is the gradual introduction of educational measures to change the attitude of the field labourer towards his methods and hours of work, which amount, on an average, to about twenty hours a week. As this question, however, involves deeply rooted family and racial traditions, it is doubtful if such habits and customs would be readily abandoned; even if they were, the psychological effect in other directions seems at present incalculable.

Varicella and Herpes.

"K. B. C." writes: On October 25th I vaccinated a young lady aged 19. On the 26th she developed a typical chicken-pox rash, which ran a normal course. On November 9th I saw her mother, aged 38, with mild chicken-pox; on the 10th her stepfather, aged 39, had developed chicken-pox, which he has had very severely, running a temperature of 103° F. for several days. He had also two well-marked patches of herpes, one over a right intercostal nerve and one over the course of the left external cutaneous nerve. As his illness was severe, the diagnosis was confirmed by the medical officer of health.

Vacancies.

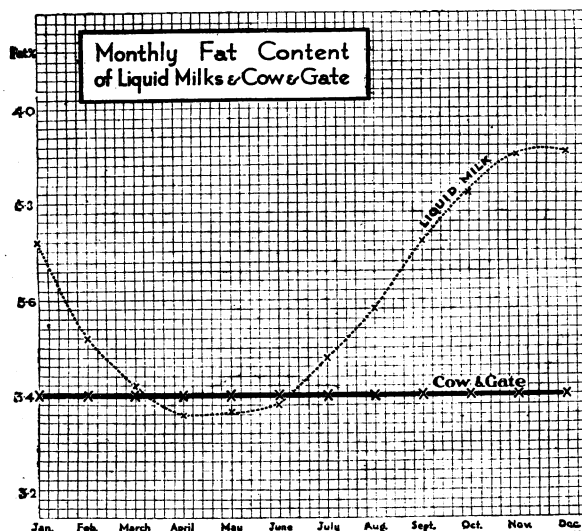
NOTIFICATIONS of offices vacant in universities, medical colleges, and of vacant resident and other appointments at hospitals, will be found at pages 48, 49, 50, 51, 55, and 56 of our advertisement columns, and advertisements as to partnerships, assistantships, and locum tenencies at pages 52, 53, and 54. A short summary of vacant posts notified in the advertisement columns appears in the *Supplement* at page 235.

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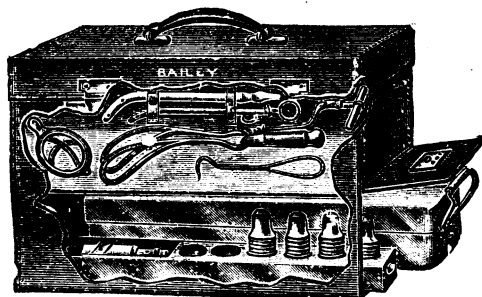
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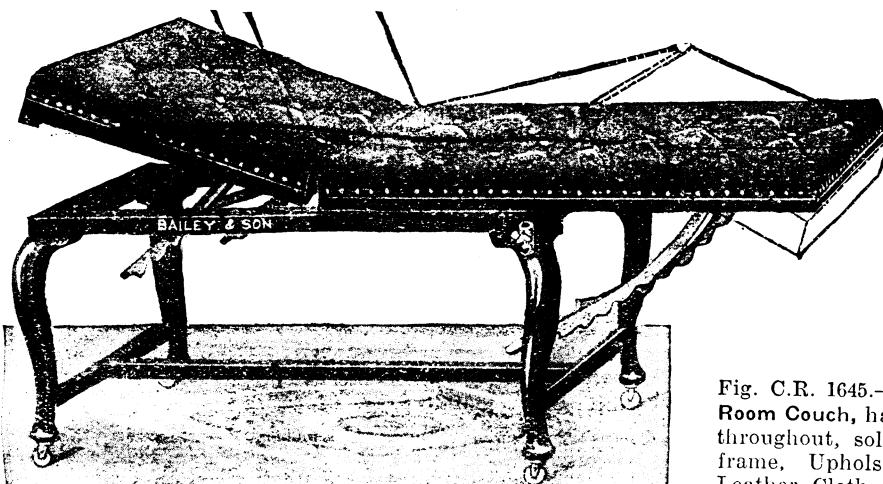
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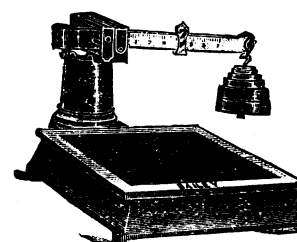
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