

"Pulex ubiquestus"

"HOPEFUL" writes: I am unfortunate enough to possess a peculiar attraction for the common flea, and the lesions in a very short space of time become urticarial in type, and are accompanied by intense itching. This summer, with the hot weather, the discomfort was very marked. Can any of your readers suggest a local application to the skin, or anything which could be sprinkled on clothes, to render me a less attractive meal. I may say that the brand we keep here seem to laugh at Keating's powder.

Blood Sugar and Blood Urea

"A. G." would be glad to know if there is any simple yet reliable apparatus for the determination of blood sugar available for use in general practice; also apparatus for determination of blood urea.

Wanted: A Drum Defender

In answer to "T. S." (*Journal*, June 3rd, p. 991), Dr. BRUCE MALAHER (Pernambuco) writes recommending Flent's "sound absorbers"—a mixture of cotton-wool and wax—obtainable, post free, for \$1.10, from Flents Products Company, 89, Broad Street, New York. He adds: I use these nightly on my ship to shut out noises of every description, and have, for the last four years, found them absolutely invaluable. In course of time the "ear balls," as I call them, become dry and tend to shrink, but each pair lasts me for two or three months, and "T. S." will probably not need more than one dollar's worth in the year.

Income Tax**Allowance for Fees Paid to Medical Agency**

"D. P. S." has claimed to deduct from his gross earnings £10 for fees paid to a medical agency for introduction as locumtenent and afterwards for the assistantship he still holds. The claim has been refused, though two years ago a similar claim was allowed elsewhere.

** So far as liabilities under Schedule E are concerned the payment to obtain an appointment is incurred anterior to and not "in performance of" the duties, and is not allowable. This would apply to the fee paid in connexion with the assistantship. In our opinion the locumtenent earnings are properly assessed under Schedule D; as the profits of carrying on a profession rather than as the earnings of employment, and on that ground we consider that the agency fees paid for locumtenent work are allowable for income tax purposes.

LETTERS, NOTES, ETC.**Cancer and Diabetes**

Dr. J. TERTIUS CLARKE (Harrow) writes: In the *Journal* of October 29th, 1932, I called attention to the association of diabetes and cancer and to the alternation of the two diseases in different members of the same family. This association was much emphasized by the late Dr. J. A. Shaw-Mackenzie, whose main hypothesis concerning the genesis of cancer was that the disease is caused by a deficiency in quantity or quality of the intracellular enzymes, though the site of the disease might be determined by local injury or irritation. It would seem that there is an hereditary tendency to a physiological deficiency in both these diseases, in the one case of insulin and in the other of certain intracellular enzymes; and, further, that the tendency to these systemic defects is sometimes limited to a family, but in the case of the Jews it becomes racial. In the *Epitome* to the *Journal* of July 29th is a note by Bolduan and Weiner on the causes of death among Jews, which shows that in both males and females the rate of death per thousand, from both diabetes and cancer, is higher among Jews than among non-Jews. In other diseases—for instance, pneumonia, phthisis, syphilis, and diseases of the liver—the rate of death is lower among Jews than among non-Jews. These statements are derived from 14,047 Jewish deaths and 27,186 non-Jewish deaths in New York City in 1931. Dr. Shaw-Mackenzie based his serum tests for cancer on this deficiency of the lipolytic and proteolytic intracellular enzymes, and claimed that together they gave a 95 per cent. correct diagnosis. His treatment was aimed at restoring the efficiency of these enzymes by the injection of olive-oil soap with bile salts by the mouth and occasionally the administration of secretin. By these measures he obtained many beneficial results, such as the reduction of pain and fetor, the disappearance of recurrent nodules in the scars, and even the cure of the patient for five, ten, or more years.

Tapeworm Infection in North-West Russia

Diphyllobothrium latum (it was known as *Bothriocephalus latus*) is of serious importance, economically, in North-West Russia as an intestinal parasite, causing a notable anaemia, clinically similar to that which ankylostoma produces. A paper by G. K. Petruschewsky and W. Tarassow of the Fishery and Medical Research Institutes of Leningrad (*Archiv f. Schiffs- u. Tropen-Hygiene*, June, 1933) indicates the gravity of the problem. They report that at least sixty-two stations for the study of intestinal worm infections have been set up in Russia and Siberia, and that they have themselves been examining conditions in the North-West, in the region of Lakes Ladoga and Onega, where they have examined over 11,000 men (women are nowhere mentioned). They quote figures of infection with *Diphyllobothrium* in this area, 4 per cent. in 89,000 examined in Leningrad, 16 in Archangel, and 23 around Murmansk; other intestinal parasites were also found. The fish were infected in proportion as the lakeside population was more numerous, and the men in proportion as more of them were engaged in fishing: in one village on Lake Onega, where all were fishermen, all were infected. Tapeworm ova reach the lake water with human dejecta. From an ovum develops a ciliated embryo which, swallowed by a cyclops or other small crustacean, grows until host and "prozoekoid" are eaten by a suitable fish, when the prozoekoid becomes freed, bores through the stomach wall of its new host, and encysts itself (now a "plerocercoid") in certain fish in the muscles, in others in the internal organs. The host fish, if caught, is in these poor regions inadequately cooked (toasted before a small fire or enveloped in paste and baked). Swallowed by man, the plerocercoid becomes again active, reaches the intestine of its new host as a tapeworm, and a fortnight later its ova are being discharged and the cycle is ready to recommence. The authors could not be satisfied with mere investigation, but opened a small hospital, where they treated 307 men; one man was infested by fourteen tapeworms, of a total length of 83 metres, or 90 yards. They boiled all dejecta, a most necessary measure. In Lake Onega they found 88 per cent. of the pike infected, and many perch. Their examination was most painstaking, and their results, if carefully followed up, will lead to great improvement in the vitality of the populace in the region concerned.

A Midwifery Case-book

Dr. E. M. R. FRAZER of Burton-on-Trent has sent us a convenient, stoutly bound, and inexpensive notebook for midwifery cases, designed to meet the needs of the general practitioner who "in all probability dislikes 'writing up cases,' but yet who, at times, does feel the need of a 'few notes.'" Modelled on an exercise book, it affords space for essential details of a hundred cases under the headings of "labour," "puerperium," and "pre-natal examination" on the left-hand page, and "name," "history," "measurements," and "ante-natal examinations," etc., on the right. The flyleaf contains an alphabetical index. The case-book will shortly be obtainable from Messrs. H. K. Lewis and Co., Gower Street, W.C.

Socialist Health Activities

Dr. F. G. BUSHNELL, Organizing Secretary, Socialist Workers' National Health Council (Nutley Cottage, Nimbridge, Woking), writes to inform readers of the *Journal* that a series of health tours to health institutions in and around London on Wednesday afternoons is being arranged in order to familiarize workers with existing institutions and their management, and to press home the need for the socialization of the health services. No charge for the course is made to employed or unemployed workers attending as individuals.

Epoch Men in British Medicine

In the annotation under this heading last week it should have been explained that Dr. Bashford's *Harley Street Calendar* first appeared in 1929, but was reissued by the same publishers a few weeks ago.

Corrigendum

In the description of the self-retaining tonsil haemostatic forceps given on page 531 of last week's issue the word "approximation" should have appeared instead of "appropriation" in the eighth line.

Vacancies

Notifications of offices vacant in universities, medical colleges, and of vacant resident and other appointments at hospitals, will be found at pages 42, 43, 44, 45, 48, and 49 of our advertisement columns, and advertisements as to partnerships, assistantships, and locumtenencies at pages 46 and 47. A short summary of vacant posts notified in the advertisement columns appears in the *Supplement* at page 176.