

of the practice for 1933, when "G. T." was a paid assistant and the profits reduced by payment of his salary and car allowance; obviously the division of an assessment so reduced between the two partners will benefit both. In addition, the same advantage will apply to June 30th, 1934, and therefore will affect half the assessment for 1935-6. This does not necessarily mean that the inspector of taxes will agree to the continuance of the cash basis, but we see no reason why he should object to that course. With regard to "G. T.'s" car depreciation claim, there is no need to have the car valued as at July 1st, 1934; the value as at that date can be calculated on a 20 per cent. written-down basis.

#### General Household Expenses

"J. S. T." states that in the town where he lives the usual professional allowance is one-third of the general household expenses, whereas in Edinburgh, so he is informed, the ratio is two-thirds. Is it worth while his appealing to the Commissioners?

\* \* The higher ratio in the cases where two-thirds is given is probably due in part to the fact that high rents are paid for houses in a particular street or quarter—the ratio would obviously be higher in, say, Harley Street than in a small country town. In the latter case the remaining two-thirds of the rent might very well be only a fair equivalent for the private accommodation. We hesitate to advise an appeal to the Commissioners, though it might succeed, as such questions are often matters of general decision within the area for which they act.

### LETTERS, NOTES, ETC.

#### Triplets Without Tears

DR. GEOFFREY BARBER (Dunmow) writes: The subject of triplets is not infrequently evoked to cause laughter in the music-hall, but one would not imagine that it would actually keep the parturient mother in peals of mirth. Yet the following case combines the two unusual features of three live sons at one birth and childbirth regarded by the patient as an amusing event. On July 12th I went to the confinement of a primigravida 25 years old. Labour was four weeks early, the abdomen was about normal in size for full time, but very puzzling to diagnose on palpation. Examination per vaginam showed that there was first a foot and later a buttocks presentation. Strong pains began at 3 p.m. The patient was very cheerful, and encouraged the pains by pushing hard herself on the fundus, and exclaiming, "Come out of it, you little rascal!" At 7.55 p.m. her efforts were rewarded by the birth of a small male child, delivered easily as a breech with extended legs. There were no efforts at respiration until this was stimulated by a gentle stream of CO<sub>2</sub>. The uterus remained much the same in size, and the mother would not believe the birth until shown the child, when she laughingly suggested the presence of a whole football team to follow. Renewed efforts on her part bore a second male child at 8.20, also a breech, and the only slightly diminished uterus now confirmed the presence of triplets. Her spirits rose even higher, and the nurse and I could not fail to join in her laughter when she abjured the third's delay with, "Come out of it, you little toad!" The patient's mother, who was waiting below, became so worried that she rushed up the stairs and burst into the room to know if she was losing her reason, and was only partly pacified at the unorthodoxy of the laughter. A third very feeble boy was born at 9.20, and at 9.35 the single placenta followed. It was oval, with three umbilical cords in a line about four inches apart. The patient then demanded a meal, and is making a very rapid recovery. The suggestion to name the triplets Tom, Dick, and Harry was eventually turned down in favour of Mark, Luke, and John. Mark and Luke flourish, but John was feeble from the first, and died twenty-four hours later. Their aggregate weight was little more than 11 lb., so that the ease of the labour was due to its being on the "instalment system."

#### Young's Rule

While the terms "Young's modulus" and "Young-Helmholtz theory" of colour vision are known to every student, the eponym "Young's rule" (for calculating the dosage of drugs suitable for children) is less familiar, and even those who are accustomed to its use may not necessarily associate it with Thomas Young. In the

current number of the *British Journal of Children's Diseases* (April-June), Dr. W. R. Bett quotes the original wording of the rule taken from Young's *Introduction of Medical Literature* (1813, p. 428). A brief account is given of the man, who is described as one of the most prodigious and baffling figures the world of science has ever seen. A precocious child, who before the age of 4 had read the Bible through twice and by the age of 14 knew a dozen languages, he became F.R.S. while still a medical student. As a doctor he was too scientific to become fashionable, and in his bedside manner he lacked the necessary air of assurance. The physician was eclipsed by the physicist, who was the author of the wave theory of light. As an Egyptologist he was a pioneer in deciphering hieroglyphics.

#### Anglo-American Continental Medical Society

A meeting of the Anglo-American Continental Medical Society and its friends in the British Medical Association will be held next week during the Bournemouth meeting. Members and guests will assemble at 12.30 p.m. on Friday, July 27th, and lunch together in the Pavilion. Those wishing to attend should communicate with Dr. Tom Williams before July 23rd, at the Royal Societies Club, St. James's Street, S.W.1.

#### Addendum

In the footnote to our review of Professor J. R. Blayney's *Dental Pharmacology and Therapeutics* (July 14th, p. 68) the name of the publisher—Henry Kimpton—was accidentally omitted.

#### Disclaimer

Dr. R. BLAIR GOULD (London, W.) writes: My attention has been drawn to an article concerning myself which appeared in two London daily newspapers last week. I wish to make it quite clear that this article was published without either my knowledge or consent.

#### "An Encyclopaedia of Sexual Knowledge"

Dr. NORMAN HAIRE (London, W.) writes: Anybody reading the report on page 94 of the *Journal* for July 11th of the prosecution concerning a pamphlet advertising the "Encyclopaedia of Sexual Knowledge," in which my name was mentioned, would be justified in inferring that I was responsible for the pamphlet. I should be obliged if you would publish this disclaimer. The facts are these. I was engaged to write some new chapters for the English edition of the book, which had already appeared in French, and to edit the English edition. Unfortunately I did not foresee that there would be any need for me to obtain an assurance that advertisements of the work should be subject to my approval. Ten thousand copies of the pamphlet were sent out before I ever saw it. As soon as I saw it I protested to the publisher that it was in bad taste, and that I objected to its being issued in connexion with a work under my editorship. I showed him copies of other pamphlets advertising books on sexual subjects issued by leading London publishers, and asked him to let me prepare a pamphlet along these lines to take the place of the one to which I objected. He refused to do so, and of course I had no way of compelling him. I had to be contented with his permission to ameliorate the pamphlet slightly, but my draft for the revised pamphlet, which I regarded as at any rate less objectionable than the original one, underwent alterations and was sent out without a proof being submitted to me. I protested again, and received an apology and an assurance that in future proofs of all new advertising matter would be sent to me. It was, however, too late for this to be of any use to me, and as a matter of fact the police authorities had already visited the firm's offices in connexion with the pamphlet. In your report the manager of the defendant company is stated to have said in court: "It was revised and extensively altered by the editor, Dr. Haire, before being sent out." If this is an accurate and full report of his statement it is the truth but not the whole truth, and conveys a false impression. As I was absent on an obstetric case in Scotland when the case was heard I was unfortunately not able to bring out these facts in court.

#### Vacancies

Notifications of offices vacant in universities, medical colleges, and of vacant resident and other appointments at hospitals, will be found at pages 38, 39, 40, 41, 44, and 45 of our advertisement columns, and advertisements as to partnerships, assistantships, and locumtenencies at pages 42 and 43.

A short summary of vacant posts notified in the advertisement columns appears in the *Supplement* at page 44.