

## Letters, Notes, and Answers

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### QUERIES AND ANSWERS

#### Senile Pruritus

"VRACH" (Cornwall) writes: Can anyone suggest a fruitful line of treatment for an old lady, aged 76, pestered with senile pruritus? All the described remedies have been tried, more or less without result.

#### Tennis Elbow

"WESSEX" writes: Can anyone advise me on the treatment of the above condition, which I developed last May after a hard game of tennis? There is swelling and tenderness over the radio-ulnar joint, and pain on flexing forearm, and marked pain on taking a back-hand stroke. Treatment has consisted of firm bandaging over the affected part and the application of iodine.

#### Spermatorrhoea when Bathing

"M.D., D.P.H." writes: A friend has consulted me regarding his son, aged 21 years. This young man, who is in splendid health and excels at athletics, is unable to bathe, for immediately on entering the water he has an emission of semen. This is the first time I have met such a condition, and I should be grateful for any information as to cause and treatment.

#### Book Wanted

"W. G. R." would be most grateful if any reader would be prepared to dispose of a copy of Sutherland's *Dispensing Made Easy*. Leading medical booksellers state that the book is out of print.

#### Income Tax

##### Motor Car and Rent Allowances

"Glasgow" bought a car for £383 in June, 1929, and sold it in March, 1934, for £52, buying another for £115. He acquired a new practice on July 1st, 1933. The house is assessed at £80; one room is entirely set aside for consulting, and another large room and the hall are used two and a half hours a day. What deduction is due?

\*\* On a 20 per cent. basis the car bought for £383 in June, 1929, will have depreciated to £157 at July 1st, 1933, and the allowance for the nine months to April 5th, 1934, will therefore be nine-twelfths of 20 per cent. of £157—that is, £23. For the year to April 5th, 1935, the depreciation allowance will be 20 per cent. of £115—that is, £23. As an expense of the twelve months to July, 1934, "Glasgow" can deduct the balance of the written-down value (£157—£23=) £134, less the amount received (£52)—that is, £82. With regard to the proportion of the assessment to be treated as a professional expense, one-half seems a little high—possibly £30 would be fair, but of course a lot depends on the actual circumstances.

#### General Expenses—Proportion

"M. S. R." explains that there is whole-time use of a consulting and a waiting room, and casual use of a drawing room; in addition, a garage has recently been erected—though it is not stated whether the Schedule A assessment has been increased to cover the addition. One maid is kept, and in her absence the practitioner's wife has to assist.

\*\* It is always difficult to suggest a reasonable ratio where so much depends on circumstances. One-half of the general expenses and one-third of the heating and lighting would seem to be a maximum, and would perhaps be somewhat generous. No deduction can be claimed for the wife's services unless she is actually paid for them.

### LETTERS, NOTES, ETC.

#### Asthma in Childhood

Dr. A. W. DOCKAR (Birmingham) writes: I note with interest the letter by "G. P." (Surrey) on this subject (July 7th, p. 48). I do not think he has cause to be too much dismayed by the result of his treatment. Factors, little understood, still confront us. The results of autogenous vaccine, in my experience, have not been too convincing. They would seem to increase the patient's resistance to infection, but their effect on the "asthmatic diathesis" is questionable. From a series of investigations over a number of years I find that, in the differential leucocyte count, the eosinophil percentage tends to fall during the winter season and to rise during the summer, and more so if the summer be warm and dry for long periods such as we are experiencing now. These variations seem to take place in spite of medicinal and autogenous vaccine therapy, and the inevitable result of a rise in the eosinophil percentage is increased liability to an asthmatic attack. It would seem to me that, in these cases, one is dealing with constitutions biochemically imbalanced and incapable of normal self-adjustment to certain internal and external influences. From investigation of family blood readings I am convinced that this fundamental state is congenital, not acquired—that is, the child derives a familial tendency which, unfortunately, is not often recognized clinically till typical asthma has developed. Perhaps a little more attention to this pre-asthmatic aspect of the subject, with a view to adopting preventive measures early, would prove of inestimable value. In the case of children the asthmatic attack has often prodromata, such as languor, gastric disturbance, etc., readily recognized by intelligent parents. To aid in aborting an attack I immediately recommend an effective purge, followed by total restriction of food for twenty-four hours. Copious draughts of water are given during that period. This seems to give the child a chance of regaining its "metabolic balance," if I should dare to use such a term. Afterwards diet is gradually resumed. I am indebted to Dr. James Adam of Glasgow for much valuable help gleaned from his book on asthma.

#### A Warning

MESSRS. E. H. WEEDON AND CO. (Bow Road, E.3) inform us that an agent recently in their employ, aged about 55-60, has been calling on medical practitioners and veterinary surgeons asking for loans of money (usually 2s. or 2s. 6d.). At present his activities are mostly confined to East and South-East London and Essex.

#### Corrigenda

In last week's issue, under the heading "Test for Live Birth" on page 142, the word "Fagerlung" should have read "Fagerlund."

The review of *Modern Treatment in General Practice*, published last week at page 118, stated that this book consists of fifty-three chapters; there are in fact fifty-six chapters.

#### Vacancies

Notifications of offices vacant in universities, medical colleges, and of vacant resident and other appointments at hospitals, will be found at pages 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 38, and 39 of our advertisement columns, and advertisements as to partnerships, assistantships, and locumtenencies at pages 36 and 37.

A short summary of vacant posts notified in the advertisement columns appears in the *Supplement* at page 84.