

THE Central Association for Mental Welfare is arranging a special three months' course for teachers of mentally defective, dull, and backward children, to be held in London from May 7th to July 25th. The course will include lectures on normal and abnormal psychology, methods of teaching, demonstrations in speech training, manual work, and the social and legal aspects concerned. Further information may be obtained from the office of the association, 24, Buckingham Palace Road, S.W.1.

By an order dated December 31st, 1924, and issued on January 30th, 1925, the Home Secretary has added to the list of conditions which must be notified in compliance with Section 73 of the Factory and Workshop Act, 1901: (1) poisoning by carbon bisulphide; (2) aniline poisoning; and (3) chronic benzene poisoning. The notice must specify the name and personal address of the patient and the disease from which in the opinion of the medical practitioner he is suffering. For this notification the medical practitioner is entitled to a fee of 2s. 6d. Failure forthwith to send a notice renders the practitioner liable to a fine not exceeding 40s.

THE private wards in Westminster Hospital are, with the permission of the Prince of Wales, president of the hospital, to be named "The Prince of Wales Wards." The new ophthalmic wards are to be named the "Wolfe Barry Wards," in memory of Sir John Wolfe Barry, chairman of the house committee from 1899 until his death in 1918.

BEGINNING with the January issue, the *Revue de Médecine* will contain short memoranda, rather than the larger original articles published hitherto. It will be mainly devoted to abstracts of the principal medical publications in France, Great Britain, Germany, Spain, and Italy which have appeared during the previous month, and will so become more definitely a review of recent medical literature.

THE fifth congress of French-speaking pediatricists will be held at Lausanne in 1926 under the presidency of Dr. Tailens, professor of children's diseases in the University of Lausanne.

THE January issue of the *Journal of the Outdoor Life* is essentially a Trudeau memorial number, being issued in connexion with the fortieth anniversary of the foundation of the famous sanatorium at Saranac Lake, New York. We gave an account of recent additions to the institution on June 14th, 1924 (p. 1062), and this anniversary number of the *Journal*, founded in connexion with the sanatorium in 1903, gives very full details of the work that has been carried on at the sanatorium. Personal recollections are supplied by several contributors, including Dr. Lawrason Brown, the originator of the *Journal*, at first an assistant resident physician and a joint builder of the sanatorium organization. A short article deals with Robert Louis Stevenson, who came to Saranac Lake in the autumn of 1887, and whilst there wrote some of his best essays, including *Pulvis et Umbra*, *The Lantern Bearer*, *A Christmas Sermon*, and some portions of *The Master of Ballantrae*. The issue is well illustrated.

THE annual medical congress known as the "Journées médicales de Bruxelles" will be held at Brussels from June 21st to 24th. Further information can be obtained from the general secretary, Dr. Beckers, 36, rue Archimède, Brussels.

THE fourth International Congress of Industrial Medicine will be held at Amsterdam in September, 1925. Further information can be obtained from the general secretary, Dr. Brocx, 55, Piekede de Hochstraat, Zimmer 64, Amsterdam.

THE twenty-ninth congress of French-speaking neurologists and alienists will be held in Paris at the end of May, 1925, under the presidency of Dr. Anglade, when the following papers will be read: Late recovery from mental disease, by Dr. Robert; familial infantile encephalopathies, by Dr. Crouzon; legal medicine and states of mental torpor, by Dr. Briand.

DR. DEVÉ has been nominated professor of clinical medicine in the medical school at Rouen.

A SUDDEN malaria epidemic in Java is reported to have caused 1,000 deaths.

WITH its January issue the *Canadian Medical Association Journal* enters the fifteenth year of its publication as the official organ of the association. During the past ten years it has doubled the number of its reading pages and increased their size. In a foreword to this issue reference is made to the visit of Sir Jenner Verrall and Dr. Alfred Cox last year, and it is noted "that after free discussion a form of affiliation was arrived at, by which our association, without losing any of its individuality, becomes affiliated with the parent society, and through it with the medical profession in all the sister dominions of the empire. This will confer certain privileges upon our members. We hope that this action may lead to many pleasant interchanges between our association and the profession in Great Britain, and in the other dominions." The annual meeting of the Canadian Medical Association will be held at Regina, from June 22nd to 26th.

Letters, Notes, and Answers.

CORRESPONDENTS who wish notice to be taken of their communications should authenticate them with their names—not necessarily for publication.

Communications intended for the current issue should be posted so as to arrive by the first post on Monday or at latest be received not later than Tuesday morning.

THE telephone number of the BRITISH MEDICAL ASSOCIATION and BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL is Gerrard 2630 (Internal Exchange). The telegraphic addresses are:

EDITOR of the BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL, *Aitology Westrand, London.*

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

MEDICAL SECRETARY, *Mediscra Westrand, London.*

The address of the Irish Office of the British Medical Association is 16, South Frederick Street, Dublin (telegrams: *Bacillus, Dublin*; telephone: 4737 Dublin), and of the Scottish Office, 6, Rutland Square, Edinburgh (telegrams: *Associate, Edinburgh*; telephone: 4361 Central).

QUERIES AND ANSWERS.

ALKALIS AS ADJUVANTS TO ACTION OF INTESTINAL ANTISEPTICS.

DR. L. WHEELER (London) writes: I should be glad to learn of any experience in the use of an alkali (sodium bicarbonate), given before meals, improving the action of an intestinal antiseptic administered after meals.

INCOME TAX.

Board and Lodging of Assistant.

"R. M." is an outdoor assistant not receiving any allowance from his principal for board and lodging. If the latter were to pay the landlady's bill each month, giving the assistant the balance of his salary, could "R. M." return that balance as his income for tax purposes and the employer deduct the full amount as a professional expense?

* It would not be correct unless a real alteration were made in the terms on which "R. M." is employed—for instance, suppose the gross salary be £x and the annual amount of the board-lodging expenses be £y, then, so long as the employer is liable under the terms of engagement to pay "R. M." £x, that is the amount of his liability, whether it be wholly paid to him personally or partly to his landlady. But if an alteration be made in a binding manner in these terms, so that the employer is bound to pay "R. M." £x-£y only and to provide him with board-lodging, then the latter is liable in respect of £x-£y only, and the employer can treat as a professional expense £x-£y plus the actual cost of the board-lodging which he provides.

LETTERS, NOTES, ETC.

MONEYLENDERS.

IN the *Times* law reports for January 26th is a note of a case heard before Mr. Justice P. O. Lawrence in the Chancery Division. It appears that a moneylender had obtained judgement summonses against two civil servants who appeared before the court. In reply to the judge one of the debtors said that they had borrowed £15 each, and the judge remarked that the amount had swollen to £64. An order was made for payment of £1 a week in one case and 10s. in the other. Addressing the debtors the judge said, "Pull yourselves together and get out of the hands of moneylenders, or it will wreck your whole careers." It appears to be the general experience that at the present time moneylenders are very active in issuing circulars offering to lend money. One rather senior member of the profession has sent us such a circular he received the other day; it contains the statement—"We may add that for a considerable time we have specialized in accommodating medical practitioners upon exceptionally low terms." The observation, quoted above, by Mr. Justice Lawrence appears to be the best comment on the risk attaching to the acceptance of such offers.

CORRECTIONS.

DR. JAMES COOK wishes to correct an error in his letter on puerperal infection, published last week (p. 236). His percentage of puerperal infection cases is 0.5 per cent.—not 0.05.

An error occurred in *Epitome*, para. 130, of our issue of January 31st. The name of the fourth of the joint authors should have been given as J. S. B. Stopford.

VACANCIES.

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

A short summary of vacant posts notified in the advertisement columns appears in the *Supplement* at page 59.