

depreciation and obsolescence allowances afford the practitioner fairly complete protection against over-payment of tax so far as car expense is concerned, and consequently make the agreement of the rate of depreciation a less important matter. A rate of 20 per cent. appears to be not uncommon, but in many cases the authorities object to allow more than 15 per cent. This would be a serious matter were it not for the fact that the aggregate allowance is equated by the "obsolescence" claim when renewal takes place.

BRITISH EMPIRE CANCER CAMPAIGN.

SIR JOHN BLAND-SUTTON, Bt., vice-chairman, presided at the quarterly meeting of the Grand Council of the British Empire Cancer Campaign, held on April 14th, when the following grants were approved: £2,500 to St. Bartholomew's Hospital towards the maintenance of its cancer research work for the year 1930, which will include the continuance and development of investigations into the deep x-ray treatment of cancer in certain sites of the body and the further study of malignant growths by slow-motion picture photography, which is now known as the "Canti film"; £950 to St. Mark's Hospital towards the maintenance of its cancer research work; £200 (making a total grant of £300) to the Yorkshire Council of the Campaign towards a special statistical inquiry carried out by it into the incidence of cancer as divulged by post-mortem investigations made at some of the principal Yorkshire, Scottish, and London hospitals. The Council also confirmed the grant arranged by the Finance Committee since its last meeting of £3,900 to the Middlesex Hospital towards the maintenance of its cancer research work for the year 1929-30.

The Council decided to convene an informal meeting of the scientific committees of the Campaign and some of those actively engaged in certain cancer research work in this country, for the purpose of reviewing the activities at present proceeding, and to consider what further lines of cancer research might be inaugurated. This informal meeting will take place shortly after the midsummer recess.

The Council approved the publication of a popular book on cancer which had been drafted by the Investigation Committee, and delegated all arrangements in connexion with the issue of the book to the Management Committee, which is responsible for the publication of the *Cancer Review* of the Campaign. This popular book will deal with all aspects of the cancer problem, and has been prepared so that it can be appreciated by the lay public.

It was reported that the British Dental Association had nominated Mr. C. H. Howkins of Birmingham to serve as its representative on the Council, and that Dr. Powell White having retired through illness, the Christie Hospital, Manchester, had nominated Professor John Shaw Dunn of the University of Manchester to serve as its representative on the Council.

ROYAL MEDICAL BENEVOLENT FUND.

DURING the first quarter of this year £2,562 has been voted in grants to 121 applicants. Subscriptions and donations are very urgently needed, as the number of applications received during the first three months of this year is even larger than that of last year. Cheques should be forwarded to the Honorary Treasurer, Royal Medical Benevolent Fund, 11, Chandos Street, Cavendish Square, London, W.1.

At the last meeting of the committee forty-two grants were voted, amounting to £866. The following were some of the cases helped:

M.R.C.S., aged 76. Applicant suffers from advanced chronic glaucoma. He has lost the sight of his right eye, and is becoming more helpless. Applicant and his wife have no private income; he is in receipt of old age pension, £26 a year. Four married children contribute £36 towards the maintenance of their parents. Fund voted £40.

M.R.C.S., aged 59. Applicant is bed-ridden, with progressive paralysis in the legs. He was compelled to give up his practice in 1925. His savings had been invested in house property, but the income derived therefrom has fallen to £130. He has to pay for nursing and attendance in addition to board and lodging. Fund voted £20.

Widow, aged 56, of L.R.C.P. and S. Since the death of her husband in 1919 she has maintained herself and educated three children by keeping a boarding-house. The children have now all obtained posts. During the last two years, although the widow has been extremely hard-working and is very thrifty, the boarding-house has not brought in a profit. Rates fell into arrears, and debts were outstanding. Fund voted £40 to pay the rates.

Widow, aged 38, of M.R.C.S. On the death of her husband, who had been ill for several years with Bright's disease, she was left with £250 a year and eight children to educate. One has obtained a scholarship, Freemasons are paying part school fees for another, friends and relations are helping towards other school fees. Fund voted £25, and has asked the Royal Medical Benevolent Fund Guild to co-operate.

Daughter, aged 61, of M.D. Has been a companion-housekeeper from the date of her father's death till December, 1929, when her employer died. She has no private income, and is now staying with friends. Fund voted £26.

Nova et Vetera.

"THE SMOAKE OF LONDON."

A REPRINT OF EVELYN'S TRACT.

Fumifugium,¹ the protest against "the Smeake of London," issued in 1661 by John Evelyn, has been republished by Dr. R. T. Gunther as an Old Ashmolean Reprint. This quaint but still applicable essay is approached by several prefaces, one by the editor of the 1772 edition, who observes that nearly half the children born and bred in "the aer of London" die under 2 years of age, and considers their fate not less cruel than that of infants exposed in China. Then follows Evelyn's own dedication to Charles II, patron of the Royal Society, in which we get a vivid glimpse of the "presumptuous smooke" rising over Whitehall and endangering the health of that intelligent and cynical monarch, while his sister, the delicate Duchess of Orleans, complains that the air irritates her breast. For she has come over from France, where, Evelyn constantly maintains, they arrange the matter of the air better. The writer then addresses the reader, expressing his indignation that man, "whose very Being is Aer," should not be able to breathe it purely, and lamenting that a noble city like London should be marred by "the avarice of a few."

Turning to his business, he discourses a little on the "nature of Aer" in a manner "conceited" in the old sense. "The Lucid and noble Aer clarifies the Blood, subtilizes and excites it"; and the poisoning of air is no less fatal than the poisoning of water and meat. One feels that the ardent Evelyn would treat manufacturers, who laugh at fines for the emission of "black smoke," much as other poisoners. He dwells with rapture on the amenities of the site of London, a city whose evils are all accidental. All its beauty is befouled by "that hellish and dismal cloud of Sea-Coal"; and its citizens breathe a black vapour created not by mere culinary fires, but by the tunnels of fumes emitted from the works of brewers, dyers, lime-burners, salt, and "sope-boylers." The city, he thinks, is so made to resemble "the suburbs of hell" rather than the imperial seat of an incomparable monarch. The denunciation of coal smoke that follows is written in the pungent and highly charged English of his time; his readers of this time will still sympathize with it. The year when Newcastle was besieged, he says, was a year when the orchards and gardens in the Strand bloomed and fruited like country enclosures.

After diagnosing further the deadly effects of this "thin black soot," which clogs life into mere existence, and urging the College of Physicians to help him, since many patients prefer the dangers of a country empiric to those of London air, he discusses his remedy, which chiefly consists in the removal of all trades that are a smoke-producing nuisance to a reasonable distance from London, five or six miles below the river, to marshy grounds where, he reasons, their corrosive blasts might even do good to the moist atmosphere. Other disagreeable centres, like slaughterhouses, might fitly join them there. But Evelyn's scheme and his corollary notion of surrounding London with a belt of pleached gardens, all sweetbrier, jasmine, lavender, rosemary, gillyflowers, and other sweet odours, deserves to be read in its entirety, for if it be sometimes merely amusing, it is often very suggestive. The little tract is inspired by a civic enthusiasm, and thanks are due to another son of Oxford for its reissue at a time when smoke and smoke abatement are very much in the air.

¹ *Fumifugium*. By John Evelyn, of Balliol College, Oxford, in 1661. Now reissued as an Old Ashmolean Reprint in the year of the refacing of the Old Ashmolean Museum, which, like "*Fumifugium*," was dedicated to King Charles II, Founder of the Royal Society. Oxford: Dr. R. T. Gunther, Folly Bridge. 1930. (2s. 6d.)