

IN response to an invitation from the President of the Rockefeller Foundation, a commission has been appointed by the Japanese Minister of Education to visit the United States next March as guests of the Foundation for the purpose of studying American and Canadian medical institutions and methods. The six members of the commission are Dr. Kinoshuke Miura, professor of medicine, Tokyo Imperial University; Dr. Sahachiro Hata, professor of medicine, Keio University, and director of the Kitasato Institute; Dr. Keinosuke Miyairi, dean of the medical college, Imperial University of Kyushu; Dr. Mataro Nagayo, professor of pathology and pathological anatomy, Tokyo Imperial University; Dr. Akira Fujinami, professor of pathology and pathological anatomy, Kyoto Imperial University; and Baron Yoshihiro Takagi, chief surgeon and professor of surgery in the Tokyo Charity Hospital and Medical College. The leading hospital and research centres of North America will be visited, and attention will be paid by the commission to public health and hospital organization and administration, as well as to medical research.

A PORTRAIT of Dr. C. J. Sells, who for forty-six years and a half served as medical officer of the Guildford Poor Law Institution, has been hung in the board room of the Guildford Guardians in appreciation of his valuable services. At the unveiling ceremony on January 27th a replica of the portrait was presented to Mrs. Sells.

THE price of Sir Archdall Reid's book, *Prevention of Venereal Disease* (Heinemann), has been reduced to 7s. 6d. net.

IT is now possible to travel in comfort from the Libyan border of Tunis to the Atlantic shores of Morocco. During the war the French Government constructed a network of splendid roads, particularly in Morocco, and since the war the Compagnie Générale Transatlantique has put motor cars upon them and established twenty-two hotels. Full particulars of these tours, and also with regard to the French Riviera, can be obtained from the Office Français du Tourisme, 56, Haymarket, London, S.W.1.

DR. ROUX, director of the Pasteur Institute of Paris, has received the distinction of the Grand Cross of the Royal Order of the Dannebrog.

## Letters, Notes, and Answers.

As, owing to printing difficulties, the JOURNAL must be sent to press earlier than hitherto, it is essential that communications intended for the current issue should be received by the first post on Tuesday, and lengthy documents on Monday.

ORIGINAL ARTICLES and LETTERS forwarded for publication are understood to be offered to the BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL alone unless the contrary be stated.

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

AUTHORS desiring reprints of their articles published in the BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL are requested to communicate with the Office, 429, Strand, W.C.2, on receipt of proof.

IN order to avoid delay, it is particularly requested that ALL letters on the editorial business of the JOURNAL be addressed to the Editor at the Office of the JOURNAL.

THE postal address of the BRITISH MEDICAL ASSOCIATION and BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL is 429, Strand, London, W.C.2. The telegraphic addresses are:

1. EDITOR OF THE BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL, *Aitiology*, Westrand, London; telephone, 2630, Gerrard.
2. FINANCIAL SECRETARY AND BUSINESS MANAGER (Advertisements, etc.), *Articulate*, Westrand, London; telephone, 2630, Gerrard.
3. MEDICAL SECRETARY, *Medisecra*, Westrand, London; telephone, 2630, Gerrard. 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.

### INCOME TAX.

\* M. D. gives particulars of the statement he sent in for assessment purposes.

\*\* We think that the root of the difficulty he finds in coming to some arrangement with the local inspector lies in the fact that the major items in his statement of earnings appear to have been estimated instead of having been taken from actual records of receipts. Out of the total gross earnings of £489, £200 is included for dispensary and £150 for private practice, and the claim for expenses of motor, chauffeur, and maid is put at an all-over figure of £350. "M. D." has evidently been placed in circumstances in which the keeping of proper records is almost impossible, but if he cannot produce more detailed evidence of his earnings than the above figures he is at a serious disadvantage in contesting the assessment. We advise "M. D." to see the inspector—or depute a friend or agent to do so—give him what

facts he can, and endeavour to come to some amicable arrangement of the whole matter. We have no doubt that if the facts as to "M. D.'s" illness are explained by letter the inspector will arrange for the matter to remain in abeyance for the present.

## LETTERS, NOTES, ETC.

### BLOOD UREA.

MR. A. BASIL ROOKE, F.R.C.S. (Bournemouth), writes: The following statement appears in Sir John Thomson-Walker's address on "Some problems of prostatectomy" published in your issue of January 27th: "The figures given as normal for the blood urea—namely, 20 to 25 per cent.—are too low in dealing with old men, and a blood urea of 40 to 50 per cent. may be present without indicating serious impairment of the renal function. I recently operated on a patient whose blood urea was 53 per cent., and who had been refused a single-stage prostatectomy on this account. The patient was in other respects a healthy man, and I disregarded the high blood urea. Recovery from the operation was uneventful." W. F. Braasch states: "It is generally recognized that an estimation of 40 mg. of urea nitrogen for each 100 c.cm. of blood would indicate a guarded prognosis, and when it reaches more than 100 mg. the prognosis is very grave" (*Diagnosis of Surgical Lesions of the Kidney*, Mayo Clinic, 1919). The practice of recording the blood urea sometimes as a percentage and at others as milligrams in 100 c.cm. facilitates such clerical errors as those in Sir John Thomson-Walker's paper, and is a source of much confusion. In the phenolsulphonophthalein test the result is expressed as a percentage, and the habitual use of the same terminology for blood urea would tend to stabilize the position of the decimal point.

\*\* We referred this note to Sir John Thomson-Walker, who writes: I am obliged to Mr. A. Basil Rooke for pointing out the clerical errors which have occurred in transcribing the figures of the blood urea in my address on prostatectomy. The figures should have been expressed in milligrams per 100 c.cm. Without doubt the use of two methods of record promotes confusion, and it would be safer to use one common method. Whether the urea should be expressed in terms of percentage or in milligrams per 100 c.cm. must lie with the biochemist rather than the surgeon.

### THE NATIONAL MILK CONFERENCE.

AN account of the National Milk Conference held at the Guildhall, London, last October, under the presidency of Viscount Astor, appeared in our columns at the time. The full report of the proceedings has now been published, in a paper-covered volume of some 220 pages, by the National Clean Milk Society, the conveners of the Conference (3, Bedford Square, W.C.1; 3s. post free). It will prove of interest and value to all who take a practical interest in the problems connected with milk and dairies.

### WINTER IN ITALY.

WE published a short time ago (January 20th, p. 116) an article on the opportunities Italy afforded to winter visitors. The Italian State Tourist Department, 12, Waterloo Place, London, S.W.1, has issued an illustrated pamphlet by Major W. Stormont, F.R.G.S., giving information on all the places mentioned in our article, and also a note on winter sport centres, such as Cortina d'Ampezzo. The price of the pamphlet is 6d., by post 1s.

### MERCURY-VAPOUR LAMPS.

MESSRS. WATSON AND SONS (Parker Street, Kingsway, London, W.C.2) have issued a bulletin on the mercury-vapour arc, with descriptions of the mercury-vapour lamp made by them.

### A CORRECTION.

THE price of the Dodge Brothers' coupé was given in our last issue as £375, whereas the figure should be £395.

### VACANCIES.

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

A short summary of vacant posts notified in the advertisement columns appears in the *Supplement* at page 47.

## SCALE OF CHARGES FOR ADVERTISEMENTS IN THE BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL.

	£	s.	d.
Six lines and under	...	...	0 9 0
Each additional line	...	...	0 1 6
Whole single column (three columns to page)	...	...	7 10 0
Half single column	...	...	3 15 0
Half page	...	...	10 0 0
Whole page	...	...	20 0 0

An average line contains six words.

All remittances by Post Office Orders must be made payable to the British Medical Association at the General Post Office, London. No responsibility will be accepted for any such remittance not so safeguarded.

Advertisements should be delivered, addressed to the Manager, 429, Strand, London, not later than the first post on Tuesday morning preceding publication, and if not paid for at the time, should be accompanied by a reference.

NOTE.—It is against the rules of the Post Office to receive *poste restante* letters addressed either in initials or numbers.