

Letters, Notes, and Answers.

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QUERIES AND ANSWERS.

THE MAXIMAL DOSE OF MERCUROCHROME.

DR. E. REAVLEY (Alta, Canada) asks for opinions on the following case. A man, aged 41, previously healthy, who had recently passed a life insurance examination, developed septic cellulitis on the left side of the neck, which spread to the upper third of each arm and the front of the chest and the left side. There was a haemorrhagic sputum from the throat, but the heart and lungs were normal. The temperature did not rise above 101° F., and the pulse ranged between 80 and 100. On the ninth day of his illness he received an intravenous injection of 320 c.cm. of 1 per cent. mercurochrome. Dr. Reavley asks whether this dose, amounting to 3.2 grams of mercurochrome, is a "record." He had previously considered that 0.2 to 0.5 per cent. solution was the strongest that should be used, and that not more than 20 c.cm. of this should be administered. In the present instance death occurred on the day following the injection.

A MANUSCRIPT GONE ASTRAY.

DR. J. P. GOOD (27, Farquhar Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham) asks our help in securing the return of a thesis entitled "An inquiry into the causation of spina bifida." He lent it to some medical acquaintance whose name he cannot recall.

WINTER MOTORING.

DR. C. F. FRANCE (Dicconson House, Wigan) writes: If "**Canadian**" (**JOURNAL**, December 31st, 1927, p. 1250) will send his address I will let him have particulars of the paraffin lamp used for warming my car for the last three or four years.

TREATMENT OF FLATULENCE.

DR. I. V. YOFFA (Victoria, Australia) writes in answer to "**West Country**" (**JOURNAL**, October 1st, 1927, p. 620), who asked for advice as to the treatment of recurrent attacks of gastric and intestinal flatulence: An effective remedy is bismuth salicylate gr. x and salol gr. ij, in a cachet. Three such doses, at hourly intervals, will check the attack, and the taking of a cachet daily on rising will prevent recurrence. An occasional laxative is necessary to counteract the constipating action of the bismuth.

INCOME TAX.

Obsolescence of Cars.

"**PERPLEXED**" explains that his firm owns three cars, bought at different dates, and desire to claim the wear and tear and obsolescence allowances for 1927-28. The inspector of taxes will allow wear and tear only on the value of the cars as written down to April, 1927, and states that the obsolescence allowance would be based on the written down value of the cars—that is, after deducting the wear and tear allowances from 1923 onwards.

"* * We agree with the inspector of taxes as regards the wear and tear allowance, but not as regards the obsolescence. The latter allowance is dealt with in Rule 7, Cases I and II, Schedule D, and it is there provided that allowances to be deducted are those 'which have at any time been made in estimating profits or gains . . .'. In our opinion, it is clear that in respect of the years 1923-24 to 1926-27 the sums treated as the appropriate allowances for the purpose of calculating the capital value as at April, 1927, cannot be said to have been made, and, therefore, should not restrict the obsolescence allowances as they become due for the different cars."

LETTERS, NOTES, ETC.

BULLOUS ERUPTION AFTER PHENYL-CINCHONINIC ACID.

"**H. M.**" writes: I have read with much interest the experience of "**J. C. M.**" with a preparation of phenyl-cinchoninic acid. I have tried a number of these, as many of them are, I am convinced, true eliminants of uric acid, or in some way regulate the oxidation of the purin bases. It is, however, very necessary to note that phenyl-cinchoninic acid is incompatible with alkalis (see *British Pharmaceutical Codex*, 1923, p. 940), and the fact that the patient to whom "**J. C. M.**" refers took potash water with the tablets may account for the eruption which followed. This untoward happening sometimes occurs after the taking of aspirin with soda or potash water. But I have never found any such trouble or discomfort to occur after the taking of an allyl ester of phenyl-cinchoninic acid, which, not being an acid, has no known incompatibles.

MOSQUITO BREEDING AND POOL-PROOF GUTTERING.

DR. F. G. CAWSTON (Durban) writes: Careful inspection of some centrally placed buildings at Durban, where mosquito breeding was particularly prevalent during a recent epidemic of dengue fever, showed that the slope of the roof guttering, when it existed at all, was quite inadequate to provide for the escape of the droppings of pigeons which frequented the buildings. In one place the down pipe was placed so far away from the end of the gutter that there was a fall for a few feet in the wrong direction. Another gutter, which originally may have been satisfactory, now contained half an inch of dry mould throughout its length. The leaf-mould which accumulates in the shaded portion of residences facilitates the breeding of mosquitos. Where possible the usual type of gutter might be replaced by one the depth of which increases with a uniform gradient towards each down pipe. This plan has been adopted in the design of one of the new buildings in Durban's principal thoroughfare, and adds to the sightliness of an imposing building, while ensuring that the gutter is permanently pool-proof. To strengthen the structure, where sheet iron is used, the gutter is preferably beaded on both borders. Without much expense all gutters should be readjusted to allow of a slope of at least 1 in 140 towards the down pipes at the commencement of each rainy season. By removing the spikes or brackets which hold the gutter in place the slope can be easily adjusted to prepare for the increased risk of mosquito breeding through the hotter months of the year.

MOTOR CAR BRAKES AND FLOODS.

The Automobile Association reminds motorists that their brakes may be put out of action after running through floods. Generally speaking, the metal-to-metal brakes are less likely to be affected than those which have fabric linings. After passing safely through a flood the brakes should be tested at once for efficiency; if they are not working satisfactorily the car should be run for a short period with all brakes slightly applied, in order to evaporate the moisture by the resulting heat. This will keep the brakes in order. With regard to the possibility of the engine stopping from submergence of the end of the exhaust pipe, there is no undue risk if the engine is kept turning at a high rate of revolutions on the first speed, which should always be employed when going through flood water.

A DISCLAIMER.

DR. ESTELLE COLE (London) writes to disclaim all responsibility in connexion with the use of her name for advertisement by a firm of woollen manufacturers. The advertisement was based on a health article which appeared in the daily press, part of which was appropriated without her knowledge or sanction. She notified the firm that she objected to her name being used in this way when the advertisement appeared.

CORRIGENDA.

MR. G. D. F. MCFADDEN, F.R.C.S., wishes the following corrections to be made in his article on mesenteric lymphadenitis, which was published in the **JOURNAL** of December 24th, 1927. In the second paragraph (p. 1174) the sentence beginning "At the Ulster Children's Hospital" should read: "At the Ulster Children's Hospital 25 cases of mesenteric lymphadenitis were treated during the years 1925 and 1926, and in the same period there were 34 cases of acute appendicitis." In page 1176 (column 2, paragraph 3) the sentence beginning "In a follow up of 20 cases" should read: "In a follow up of 20 cases of mesenteric lymphadenitis on which an appendectomy was done in the Royal Victoria Hospital, 12 cases were traced for six to twelve months after their operation. Of these, 5 were considered cured, 4 were no better, 2 felt improved but not cured, and 1 was cured who had the appendix and a calcareous gland removed."

DR. A. NORMAN LEEING desires to make a correction in his letter on the treatment of prostatic enlargement published in the **JOURNAL** of December 24th, 1927 (p. 1204). The figure "40 per cent." (in the second line) should read "20 per cent."

VACANCIES.

NOTIFICATIONS of offices vacant in universities, medical colleges, and of vacant resident and other appointments at hospitals, will be found at pages 45, 46, 47, 48, and 49 of our advertisement columns, and advertisements as to partnerships, assistantships, and locumtenencies at pages 50 and 51.

A short summary of vacant posts notified in the advertisement columns appears in the *Supplement* at page 7.