

treatment of clean incised wounds? It may even be that suitable wounds heal quicker without dressings.—I am, etc.,

Royal Infirmary,  
Preston, Lancs.

H. J. DONE.

### Emigration of British Doctors

SIR,—There seems still to be considerable confusion as to the number of doctors emigrating each year. Dr. A. F. H. Britten (June 16, p. 1694) expressed concern at the lack of records in this respect, and neither the Minister nor Dr. John Seale has produced figures claiming to be 100% accurate. These figures, however, are readily available, at least to the Minister, from the N.H.S. superannuation department.

When I left this country for the West Indies in 1957 the superannuation department inquired after a very short time why my contributions had ceased. Similarly on returning to this country last year the superannuation department demanded a contribution on the payment of my first month's salary. I have no doubt that they will also be aware of my departure when I emigrate to Australia in a few months' time.

Since it is in the interest of the Minister to refute Dr. Seale's emigration statistics, I have no doubt that were they in his favour the superannuation figures would have been published. It is tempting to deduce that this failure of publication infers that Dr. Seale's figures are probably quite accurate.—I am, etc.,

Wootton Bassett, Wilts.

R. G. McCORMICK.

### Cost of Private Beds

SIR,—Mr. W. G. Bradley's query (June 16, p. 1695), if query it is, is readily answered. The patient in the private wing pays for such things as radiological and pathological services in settling his medical bill, and for nursing, domestic staff, lighting, etc., in settling his room bill, the proportion of such costs chargeable to the wing being calculated on standard principles by Ministry accountants. The private patient in fact pays twice for such services, once as a taxpayer for the provision of these services in the general ward of which he is not taking advantage. In any case Mr. Bradley's point has no bearing on the main issue, the implications of which I deliberately did not bring out in my original letter. Thus, since the wing is not profit-making, any increased charge for the cheaper rooms has to be compensated for by a reduction in charge for the more expensive rooms, a reversal of the traditional Robin Hood role of medicine.—I am, etc.,

London W.1.

DAVID H. PATEY.

### Arousal of Passions

SIR,—Let no one imagine after reading the medico-legal notes in your issue of May 12 (p. 1350) that he may with impunity cast aspersions on any patient, fellow practitioner, or other person being the object of his hatred in any letter however carefully it be addressed to ensure that it is not seen or read by others. Although no civil action can be maintained without publication yet an action may lie for criminal libel on the grounds that it may be liable to rouse passions and so endanger the public peace.—I am, etc.,

Public Health Department,  
London E.C.1.

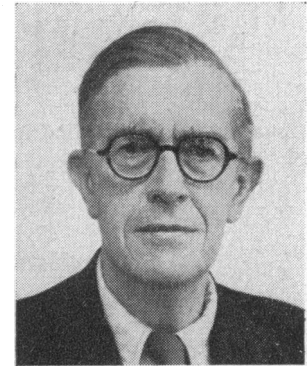
C. O. S. BLYTH BROOKE.

## Obituary

E. A. BLAKE PRITCHARD, M.D., F.R.C.P.

Dr. E. A. Blake Pritchard, physician to University College Hospital and the National Hospital for Nervous Diseases, Maida Vale, died in University College Hospital on June 9 after a long and enfeebling illness notable for its gradual and relentless absorption of his physical powers—and for his determination to concede nothing to illness which will-power may command. He was 63 years of age.

Eric Alfred Blake Pritchard was educated at Whitgift School, where his father was headmaster. He went as an undergraduate to King's College, Cambridge, where he had a reputation for mathematical ability. He remained always much of a Cambridge man, probably obtaining from his student days his lasting interest in philosophy and logic, and his belief in the tutorial system. He served in the Friends' Ambulance Unit during the first world war, and had poliomyelitis, fortunately without serious paralysis. It is possible that the rigours of his service sowed the seeds of a respiratory weakness which was later to hamper him so severely.



His clinical training was at University College Hospital, where he had a Goldsmith entry scholarship and, later, a Magrath clinical scholarship. Qualifying in 1924 and graduating M.B., B.Ch. in the following year, he held resident posts at University College Hospital and then began specialized neurological work at the Maida Vale Hospital for Nervous Diseases (where he was later to become senior physician). He became resident medical officer at the National Hospital, Queen Square. Next he returned to University College Hospital, working on the medical unit under the late Professor T. R. Elliott, F.R.S. He had already shown great talents in setting up physiological experiments and published work on electromyography, mainly in *Brain*. He obtained the M.R.C.P. in 1926 and proceeded to the Cambridge M.D. in 1929. Some thirty years ago he became physician both to University College Hospital and to Maida Vale Hospital. He was elected F.R.C.P. in 1936. He was in those years one of the first clinicians to use prostigmine for myasthenia gravis and published one of the very earliest papers on its uses.

One of the founder members of the Association of British Neurologists in 1933, he later served on its council and from time to time presented papers. He was responsible for more than one edition of *Aids to Neurology*. At one time or another he had several other hospital appointments, including those to the Western Ophthalmic, the Samaritan, the Wembley, and the Hackney Hospitals. He was an examiner in ophthalmology in the F.R.C.S. At the time of his death he was a vice-president of the Section of Neurology of the Royal Society of Medicine, with the prospect of becoming president of the Section in 1964, shortly before his retirement became due.

The bare chronology of his degrees, appointments, and published works does not serve to reveal the person who had so much affection for the traditions both of Cambridge and of University College Hospital. His colleagues and students will remember a quiet and gentle person, who really served on committees and students' organizations without