

Letters, Notes, and Answers.

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1. EDITOR of the *BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL*, *Aitology*, Westrand, London; telephone, 2631, Gerrard.
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3. MEDICAL SECRETARY, *Medisecra*, Westrand, London; telephone, 2634, Gerrard. The address of the Irish Office of the British Medical Association is 16, South Frederick Street, Dublin, and of the Scottish Office, 6, Rutland Square, Edinburgh.

QUERIES AND ANSWERS.

INCOME TAX.

"W. B. C." inquires as to the assessment of income entirely derived from service on pensions boards.

* * * As the appointment is not held directly under the War Office it would presumably be impracticable to support a claim to the special "service" rates of tax, and the income would be liable at the ordinary earned rates—that is, 2s. 3d. in the £ if the total income does not exceed £500, and 3s. if it is between that amount and £1,000. A reasonable sum to represent the additional cost of hotel board and residence would be an admissible deduction if the duties of the appointment—it is assumed that there is only one appointment—involve travelling from place to place.

"J. S." has been residing abroad as a missionary, and has been in this country on full salary since last June. What is his liability to income tax?

* * * We assume that our correspondent has not maintained a residence in this country during his absence abroad. He is liable for the financial year ending April 5th, 1920, as a British resident. The appropriate form for his declaration is No. 12, and he can obtain one from the local inspector of taxes. He will be assessable on the amount of his salary so far as received in this country, less the abatement according to the usual scale, wife allowance of £50, provided that the total joint income of himself and his wife does not exceed £800 per annum, and life assurance allowance; the rate of tax will, of course, be on the earned scale, and he will apparently have a right to set off some excess tax suffered on his income from investments. A personal call at the office of the inspector of taxes might serve to clear up these questions conveniently.

LETTERS, NOTES, ETC.

A WARNING.

DR. W. J. O'SULLIVAN (16, William Street, Limerick, Ireland) writes to put medical men on their guard against a scheme for extracting money from their pockets. A well dressed man, he says, calls upon a medical practitioner (usually an Anglo-Irishman), stating that he has just been released on parole from an English prison, where he was interned for a seditious utterance, or tells some such story. He expresses great anxiety to get back to Ireland to resume his practice. In two cases in which Dr. O'Sullivan says his name was used, money was obtained, but not repaid as promised.

TREATMENT OF PSOROPTIC MANGE (PSOROPTES COMMUNIS, VAR. CUNICULI).

MR. J. E. M. MELLOR, B.A. (Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge), writes: The following note on a simple and successful treatment of psoroptic mange in a rabbit may be of interest.

On February 11th, 1919, a laboratory attendant brought me a rabbit, one ear of which was in the condition described by Cranston Low in 1911 (*An Investigation into Scabies in Laboratory Animals*, *Journ. of Path. and Bact.*, vol. xv, p. 338). The whole of the inside of the ear was filled with a mass of dry crusts like flakes of pastry. There was an offensive smell and the ear was tender and warmer to the touch than the unaffected one. There were a few dry scurfy scales on the outside of the ear, but these contained no acari. The head was sometimes carried slightly inclined to the side of the affected ear which hung down limply. The rabbit was observed to scratch occasionally and shake its head, when portions of the scaly debris would be shaken out.

On February 11th, portions of the pastry-like flakes were carefully removed from the ear with forceps (one piece removed measured 1.5 inches long and was 0.5 inch thick). Below these dry scales there was a soft whitish-yellow substance. This material and the crusts were examined under

the microscope and found to contain large numbers of acari. A small bunch of acari was placed on a slide under the microscope and a drop of a solution composed of 1 per cent. creosote oil mixture, 0.25 per cent. bile, and 10 per cent. soft soap was run in. All the mites were dead in four minutes. (For the composition of creosote oil mixture see "Investigations on the Prevention of Nuisances arising from Flies and Putrefaction," by F. W. Foreman and G. S. Graham-Smith, *Journ. Hygiene*, 1917, xvi, 2, pp. 109-226.)

A few drops were therefore applied to the inside of the rabbit's ear with a small pipette. On February 12th and 13th the same treatment was repeated. Only a few drops of the solution were used, as it was not certain whether it would irritate the tender surface of the animal's ear. On February 14th mites found were sluggish. Since no signs of irritation were observed and the animal did not seem worried by the treatment, more solution was used on February 14th and 15th. The ear was held up by an attendant, and a few cubic centimetres of the liquid kept in for four minutes on both occasions. No mites were found on February 15th. On February 18th the ear was quite clean, save for two lump-like scabs on the outside and back of the ear. These scabs were slightly raised off the surface of the skin and treated with a few drops of solution.

On March 5th the rabbit was again examined carefully. No parasites were seen, and the ear was clean, though it still felt a little warmer than the unaffected one.

The cure was therefore effected in four days. After the first treatment on February 11th the rabbit was placed in a clean hutch. The infected hutch was cleaned out and all the scrapings burnt. The inside of the hutch was then thoroughly sprayed with creosote oil mixture undiluted. A healthy rabbit placed in the disinfected hutch and rabbits in the adjoining hutch remained clean.

A mangy rabbit taken from another hutch was later completely cured by similar treatment administered by an attendant when I was away. Less than 50 c.cm. of solution were used, so that the cost of treatment of the rabbit amounted to less than a penny.

These mites are very active; one mite dragging its mate in copulo was timed with a stop-watch on the small striations on the back of a linen-covered book. It was found to cover 6 mm. in five seconds.

A GRATEFUL COUNTRY.

A CASE recently brought to notice is that of a medical officer who sustained a serious wound of the head causing hemiplegia. He recovered sufficiently to return to military service, but was again wounded, this time in the foot. He has been discharged with a pension of £170 a year. He is a married man with children. The National Relief Fund exists to help men who have thus suffered for the country, and it has recently made a grant to the medical War Emergency Fund, and from this fund something may be done for this individual medical officer. But is it right, and is it in accord with the intention of the country, that men who have served so well and suffered so much should have to seek help to supplement their pension? Ought not the pension itself to be adequate? It may be said that this officer's pension is nearly as much as a man in the ranks will receive if totally disabled. But is it good national economy to put a professional man in such a position that he cannot educate his son to succeed him in his profession?

ERYSIPELAS: A CORRECTION.

DR. F. S. ARNOLD calls attention to an error in his reply to "X.Y.Z." in last week's *JOURNAL*. The word "eczema" (p. 278, col. 1, line 5) should, of course, be "erysipelas."

VACANCIES.

NOTIFICATIONS of offices vacant in universities, medical colleges, and of vacant resident and other appointments at hospitals, will be found at pages 35, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, and 43 of our advertisement columns, and advertisements as to partnerships, assistantships, and locum tenencies at pages 36, 37, and 38.

The following appointments of certifying factory surgeons are vacant: Belurbet (Cavan), Berkeley (Gloucester), Bruff (Limerick), Clonakilty (Cork), Halstead (Essex), Lochgilphead (Argyll), Romford (Essex), Stock (Essex), Stourport (Worcester), Toddington (Bedford).

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Seven lines and under	0	6	0
Each additional line	0	0	9
Whole single column	4	0	0
Whole page	12	0	0

An average line contains six words.

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