

Letters, Notes, and Answers

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QUERIES AND ANSWERS

An Unusual Sign in Diabetes Mellitus

Dr. S. VATCHER (Barnet) writes: In reply to Dr. Fawcett's inquiry (*Journal*, April 28th, p. 785) I may state that in the course of routine examinations, while I was in charge of the Ministry of Pensions Diabetic Clinic, I noted in about fifteen cases out of 300 investigated that the first sign which the patient had noticed had been a white powdery deposit on his trousers, underclothes, or boots.

Dr. H. J. STARLING (Norwich) writes: I have frequently met with this deposit of sugar on the boots of male diabetic out-patients, and it has struck me how careless such men must be in the final stages of micturition. Quite a few diabetics come to my out-patient department on account of this white boot deposit. In the females the complaint is sometimes of the stiffness of their undergarments.

"**R. C. C.**" (Petersfield) writes: I was asked by an elderly glycosuric patient the other day to test a specimen of his water, and when I told him it was sugar-free he replied, "I thought so, as I have no white powder on my boots." In his younger days he used to gauge his trouble by the encrustations on his boots!

Income Tax

Amount of Liability

"**BLIMEY**," writing from abroad, asks what will be his position as regards income tax with an income of £500, all derived from dividends.

** If unmarried our correspondent's liability will be as follows:

On the first £100	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	nil
On the next £175 at 2s. 3d.	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	£19 13 9
On the balance of £225 at 4s. 6d.	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	£50 12 6
									£70 6 3

If he is married the "first" section is £150, and the amount payable will be £12 10s. less.

Assistant—Cash Allowance for Rooms, etc.

"**B. R. C.**" was employed at a salary plus free lodging and housekeeper's services. After a few years this arrangement was changed, and in lieu of those benefits he receives a cash allowance of £52 a year. Must he include this as an assessable emolument?

** Yes. The other arrangement was of a special type. "**B. R. C.**" now receives a total cash remuneration (like most employees), and is liable on the full amount. The previous year's basis applies, so that if the change was made from, say, the end of September, 1934, he will be liable to include one-half of £52 = £26 in his return for the year commencing April 5th, 1934.

LETTERS, NOTES, ETC.

Sedatives in Lobar Pneumonia

"**NEST**" writes: Professor Arthur J. Hall, in his article on "Bodily Diseases in Mental Disorders" in the *Journal* of January 27th, when dealing with pneumonia in mental patients, draws attention to the marked effect of restful nights, so noteworthy. He suggests that "a free use of effective sedatives may do more good than harm." This reminds me of the teaching of Dr. G. W. Balfour, the eminent heart specialist of Edinburgh, who some fifty years ago strongly advocated chloral hydrate in this disease. In my youthful days I ventured in this way, with what appeared excellent effect. Unfortunately youth's rashness mellowed into middle-age timidity, and I listened to the sage advice of the vaccine therapist, who offered me the crumbs of comfort that dropped from his bench. No doubt typing and Felton have promoted the literature of the subject, but I wonder whether the comfort of the patient has yet had its therapeutic due.

Tannic Acid Dressing

Dr. A. H. BENNETT (Northwich) writes: It may be of some interest to readers to hear of a very simple method which I use to apply tannic acid to burns. Messrs. Woolley and Sons of Manchester have prepared for me surgical lint impregnated with tannic acid and mercuric chloride in such proportions that when the lint is thoroughly saturated with water it contains a 2 per cent. solution of tannic acid and a 1 in 2,000 solution of mercuric chloride. This affords a simple and convenient means of applying tannic acid to a burn, as suggested by Mr. Mitchiner, both as a first-aid and as a permanent dressing. I have successfully used this method in a number of cases, and the results have compared very favourably with those of others treated with fresh solution made from tablets.

The Cause of Hyperpiesia

Dr. G. ARBOUR STEPHENS (Swansea) writes: May I be allowed to state that the value of Dr. Donnison's article (*Journal*, April 21st, p. 704) would have been greatly increased had he (1) given us a definition of what he understands by "hyperpiesia," and (2) stated the size of the sphygmomanometer armlets used by him for his investigation. The estimations of the blood pressure vary with the size of the armlet, from 150 mm. Hg as normal with a two-inch armlet, to 120 mm. Hg with one four inches in width. A definition is necessary so that readers may have a good idea of what is in the mind of the writer when he talks about systolic and diastolic pressures and how they are related to one another. If the diastolic be the pressure on the blood in the arteries which the systolic pressure of the heart stroke has to overcome there must obviously be a normal ratio of greatest efficiency. By my method, using a two-inch armlet, the systolic pressure is normally 150 mm. Hg, and the basic pressure is 50 mm. Hg—that is, the most efficient ratio is three to one. When the ratio becomes two to one or lower, either as 150/80 or 90/50, it is obvious that the heart is pumping against an increased force and is working under great difficulty. The raising of the basic from 50 to 80, or the dropping of the systolic from 150 to 90, disturbs the normal ratio to apparently about the same extent, but the cause is greatly different in each case. The raising of the basic from 50 to 80 mm. would probably be due to the presence of toxins in the blood, whereas the lowering of the systolic from 150 to 90 mm. might be due to some nervous disturbance. The treatment in each case would therefore be quite different.

Corrigenda

Leucocyte Counts

Dr. JAMES ADAM (Glasgow) writes: In my letter in the *Journal* of April 28th (p. 775), the phrase "injection of urea" in regard to increase of eosinophils should read "ingestion of urea."

Health of the Navy 150 Years Ago

Surgeon Captain **B. PICKERING PICK**, Editor, *Journal of the Royal Naval Medical Service*, writes (from Gosport): A mistake occurred in the article entitled "The Health of the Navy 150 Years Ago" (*Journal*, April 28th, p. 760). The abstract from the *Journal of the Royal Naval Medical Service* was by R. R. James, and not R. R. Jones, as stated.

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, 49, and 52 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 at page 834.