Letters, Notes, and Answers

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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Diet for Wheat-sensitivity

“A.M.” writes: Could any reader inform me where to obtain barley bread, barley flour, soya bean flour and biscuits for an unfortunate patient who is sensitive to wheat?

Income Tax

Replacement of Car

“R.S.” bought an F car in 1935 for £176. In 1937 he sold it for £70 and bought an S car (of lower horse-power) for £211. What is he entitled to charge as an expense of replacement?

** His out-of-pocket expenditure was £211 – £70 = £141. But of this amount part—that is, £211 – £176 = £35 —was spent in improving his car equipment. He is therefore entitled to deduct as a cost of replacement only £141 – £35; that is, £106. (This assumes that the cost of an F car of similar power and condition to that purchased in 1935 was the same at the date when the S car was bought in 1937; if it had increased to, say, £200, then the amount allowable is £200 – £70.) The principle involved is that no deduction is due for improvements as they are chargeable to capital and not to revenue account.

LETTERS, NOTES, ETC.

A Newspaper’s Apology to Lord Horder

The Managing Director of Associated Newspapers Limited writes under date January 16: Your attention may have been drawn to an article which appeared in the Daily Mail of Thursday last referring to Lord Horder, and stating that he had been assisting behind the scenes in the filming of Dr. Cronin’s book The Citadel. This statement, Lord Horder informed us, was entirely unfounded. In consequence a paragraph of correction was published in to-day’s Daily Mail, in which we expressed our apologies to Lord Horder for the mistake that had arisen.

** The paragraph of apology in the Daily Mail of January 16 contains the following statement by Lord Horder: “Everything whitewash but do not replace the film in an advisory or any other capacity. I have never even read the book nor even seen the film at any stage in its preparation or since, and am unable to understand how the article came to be written.”

Decline of Breast-feeding

Dr. J. B. Hogg (Kooroa, Western Australia) writes: The basic reason for the declining birth rate, the decline of breast-feeding, and the increasing number of nursering mothers is the neglect of the art of baby-rearing. Young mothers are encouraged by official actions and public opinion to submit to the guidance of nurses and doctors well grounded in science but “debauched by sex or sensuality” from any understanding of the art, and whose attitude to the qualified teachers of the art (the grannies) is one of hostility and contempt. If art and science must be contrasted, then for me it is the greater good to be served by the grannies. Their stories are more tempting than those of an equally good dietitian: the work of a great artist means more than correct art. (An apology will be sent to any dissenter from the above proposition on proof that he habitually wears one of the outfits of clothing scientifically designed for the British adult.) Comparing figures we find that when art (personified in granny) directed baby welfare the race increased in numbers; under science (the clinical) it is headed for extinction. But there is no need for this division and opposition. By training suitable grannies in baby welfare and letting them train their teachers a sound combination of art and science should be possible, and the rearing of babies should be made more interesting to the normal woman than bridge or golf is. I am told this is Utopian and impossible: I firmly believe that if it fails nothing can succeed. If it is ever tried one practical point must be watched—the grannies must have separate classes. In the country of the blind a person with theories of colour vision is an idiot and a nuisance. One granny training in a class of childless women is quickly taught to shut up or get out.

Floodlit Obstetrics

Dr. E. M. R. Frazer (Burton-on-Trent) writes: Many cottages previously lit by oil or candles are now fitted with electric light. Fitters, hardly being able to appreciate the best site for light in obstetrics, have in most cases hung the light over the centre of the bed. A result is a perineum not too well illuminated. I have found that a “floodlight” sufficiently small to carry in the bag can be made up in a few minutes by wiring a bakelite lamp-holder and fitting it through a hole cut in the bottom of a tin can. The shade-holder ring fixes the lamp-holder firmly. The tin should be deep enough to accommodate a small (20-watt) lamp, and the lid can be replaced to protect the lamp when not in use. Ruber flex is required, the other end being attached to a bayonet-cap adapter. To connect up the light the room lamp is removed and a two-way adapter is fitted to the light holder. The result is a floodlight adapter to the leg, both room and perineum are then illuminated. A square tin is best as it is less likely to roll, or a large spring clip, or even a wooden clothes peg, can be fitted to the tin to anchor the lamp to the bedclothes. An alternative to the tin is a glass jar with a metal screw top, although these are rather heavier than a tin. The sketch makes the idea clear, and the total cost need not exceed 1s. 8d.

Malignant Tertiary Parasite: Correction

Lieutenant-Colonel J. A. Sinton (Horton Hospital, Epsom) writes: An article by Sir Richard Christopher and myself on the correct name of the malignant tertian malaria parasite appeared in the Journal of December 3, 1938 (p. 1130). Although the correct specific name has been emphasized in the text, a regrettable error has crept into the table headed “(A) Nomenclature de jure,” in the third column of which the name “Plasmodium quartanum (Celli & Montanari, 1889)” should read “Plasmodium malariae (Gr. & Fel., 1889).”

Corrigendum

In Drs. Owen, Huwer, and Whittaker’s article on apical bronchogenic carcinoma (December 31, 1938, p. 1360), an error occurred in the description of Case I (paragraph two, line one) and also of Case II (paragraph two, line six). The word “myopic” should in each instance read “contracted.”