

Letters, Notes, and Answers.

Authors desiring reprints of their articles published in the BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL are requested to communicate with the Office, 429, Strand, W.C., on receipt of proof.

TELEGRAPHIC ADDRESS.—The telegraphic address of the EDITOR of the BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL is *Aitology, Westrand, London*. The telegraphic address of the BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL is *Articulate, Westrand, London*.

TELEPHONE (National):—
2631, Gerrard, EDITOR, BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL.
2630, Gerrard, BRITISH MEDICAL ASSOCIATION.
2634, Gerrard, MEDICAL SECRETARY.

Queries, answers, and communications relating to subjects to which special departments of the BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL are devoted will be found under their respective headings.

QUERIES.

INQUIRER wishes to be informed as to the best exercises to advise in the treatment of scoliosis in a girl of 17 years.

DR. F. HONE MOORE (Somersham, Hunts) desires to hear of a home for an old lady able to pay five or six shillings a week.

H. E. L. asks whether pituitary gland has been used for defective growth of the long bones in children, and to be referred to literature on the subject.

SENEX asks for advice in the treatment of a patient, aged 59, who wears artificial teeth and suffers from repeated attacks of stomatitis, with small pimples on different parts of the lower jaw, making the wearing of the denture painful; she has also had several attacks of diarrhoea. Her mother died from scirrhus of the rectum, and our correspondent asks whether any connexion between the two diseases is likely.

WESTMORLAND writes: I shall be glad if any member will give me a hint as to the treatment of eczema of the glans penis of about two years' duration, on and off, in a gentleman of about 70, subject to attacks of gout in the feet, and who had syphilis fifty years ago. If he does not cleanse between the glans and prepuce, in three days a balanitis with phimosis results. There are a few papules, with a slight blush on the glans, which once assumed a pustular form. Thinking it might be a remnant of his old complaint, I gave him the usual treatment, but without benefit, as also was that for gout. Local applications of lot. nigra or liq. plumbi arrest the inflammation, especially the latter, but they do not produce a cure, nor does ung. Hebrae with a few drops of liq. picis carb. added.

THE PROPHYLAXIS OF ACUTE NASAL CATARRH.

"PUZZLED" has a patient, a man of about 30 years of age, who suffers from constantly recurring attacks of acute nasal catarrh. These attacks come on about every six weeks, quite irrespective of weather conditions. They are accompanied by a feeling of malaise, and vague pains are complained of, such as one finds associated with a slight febrile condition. The catarrhal condition commences in the nasal mucous membrane, and in the course of twenty-four to forty-eight hours usually spreads to the naso-pharynx and larynx. In about a week or ten days the patient feels quite normal, but can nearly always count on having the same repeated in the course of a few weeks. Between the attacks the mucous membranes appear healthy, and there is no intranasal deformity to account for these oft-repeated attacks. The patient leads an outdoor life, and keeps himself in good condition by suitable exercise. Anti-rheumatic treatment has been tried, and the nasal cavities have been subjected to daily flushings with antiseptic alkaline lotions; but no success has resulted. Vaccine treatment has not yet been attempted. Perhaps some of our readers can offer suggestions.

ANSWERS.

SOLVENT FOR HARD WAX.

The following answers have been received to the query of "I. Z. I." with regard to a solvent for hard wax:

DR. J. WESTALL ANDERTON (Arnside) recommends equal parts of liq. hydrogen peroxid and glycerine. Application morning and evening for three days will enable the wax to be removed with gentle syringing.

MR. ADAIR DIGHTON, F.R.C.S. (Liverpool), recommends an instillation of hydrogen peroxide (10 vols.) left in the ear for about ten minutes before syringing.

G. A. F. writes: For some time past I have been in the habit of using glycerine 3j with saturated (or nearly saturated) solution of sodium bicarbonate ʒij dropped in the ear six to ten times a day for two days. It is also a good plan to place a piece of absorbent cotton-wool wet with the above solution in the meatus to retain the drops. A very ancient plug may need a second course of treatment after the removal of the outer part by the first syringing, for which I use a hot solution of sodium bicarbonate.

PATER writes: I find a mixture of aether. sulph. 1 part, and olive oil 3 parts invariably efficient in softening wax, however hard, in the ear, sufficiently to allow of its being easily syringed out by soapy water if the latter is used as hot as the ear can bear. The temperature is important. The etherized oil should be dropped in the night before and also on the morning that the syringing is done.

DR. HARRY GREY (Bristol) writes to state that a saturated solution of sodium bicarbonate mixed with equal part of glycerine is a much better solvent than oil. Hydrogen peroxide is also very effective, and may be used freely at the time of syringing.

M. suggests hot water, since ear wax melts, or at any rate becomes soft, at 100° F.; syringing with water at 105° F., which the external ear can bear comfortably, or thereabouts, will materially hasten the removal of all natural plugs. It is necessary to use a thermometer.

MR. MACLEOD YEARSLEY (London) writes that there are at least two better solvents for hard wax than warm oil. The first is hydrogen peroxide, which will generally, if instilled for ten minutes, be sufficient to break up a moderately hard plug. Should this fail, two or three drops of ether, instilled for two minutes, will usually have the desired effect. In using ether, however, it must first be ascertained that the plug fills the meatus, as, should the drug reach the membrana tympani, it causes great pain.

LETTERS, NOTES, ETC.

THE MEDICAL DIRECTORY FOR 1914.

I.M.S. writes: I was glad to see "F.R.C.S.'s" letter in the BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL of August 9th. To my mind the leaving out of past medical appointments takes away more than half the value of the *Medical Directory*. I think, if it is necessary to curtail the entries, the list of literary contributions might well be cut down, but all past medical appointments should most certainly be inserted, as they enable one to judge of a man's position and ability better than anything else in the book. I wrote to the editors on the subject, and received a most courteous reply in which they promised to give the matter their careful consideration; and I trust that now attention has been called to the subject in the BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL others may be induced to write to the editors of the *Directory* asking them to re-insert all past appointments, as I do not doubt that if a sufficient number did so the matter would be remedied.

DOSAGE OF STRYCHNINE SALTS.

In a short article in the *Pharmaceutical Journal* of August 23rd, Mr. G. Lunan draws attention to the varying amounts of strychnine contained in different salts of this alkaloid, according to the molecular weight of the acid with which it is combined and the presence or absence of water of crystallization. Of the salts enumerated, the formate contains most strychnine (88 per cent.) and the arsenate least (69 per cent.); thus to obtain, for example, $\frac{1}{2}$ grain of strychnine, $\frac{3}{8}$ grain of the arsenate, $\frac{1}{2}$ grain of hydrochloride, $\frac{3}{8}$ grain of formate, etc., must be taken. The point raised is not without importance in calculating the dosage of these compounds, and the tables which are given show at a glance the equivalent quantities of the various salts of the alkaloid in common use.

WARNINGS.

A CORRESPONDENT who resides near Lowestoft recommends medical men, before giving assistance to a person describing herself as a nurse, of Lyndhurst, Sittingbourne, Kent, to make inquiries as to the genuineness of her story.

DR. BERNARD E. POTTER, of Park Street, Park Lane, W., desires it to be known that some person unknown to him, having apparently obtained possession of some of his visiting cards, has used one at least of them by writing on it a supposed message from Dr. Potter, and signing it with his initials. The card was left at the house of a medical man. The handwriting, though not the wording, suggests that the writer must have been educated abroad.

ERRATUM.

In the JOURNAL for September 13th, p. 699, col. i, line 58, for "does necessarily" read "does not necessarily."

SCALE OF CHARGES FOR ADVERTISEMENTS IN THE BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL.

	£	s.	d.
Seven lines and under	0 5 0
Each additional line	0 0 8
A whole column	3 10 0
A page	10 0 0

An average line contains six words.

All remittances by Post Office Orders must be made payable to the British Medical Association at the General Post Office, London. No responsibility will be accepted for any such remittance not so safeguarded.

Advertisements should be delivered, addressed to the Manager, 429, Strand, London, not later than the first post on Wednesday morning preceding publication, and, if not paid for at the time, should be accompanied by a reference.

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