Letters, Notes, and Answers.

All communications in regard to editorial business should be addressed to the EDITOR, British Medical Journal, British Medical Association House, Tavistock Square, W.C.I.

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All communications with reference to ADVERTISEMENTS, as well as orders for copies of the Journal, should be addressed to the Financial Secretary and Business Manager.

The TELEPHONE NUMBERS of the British Medical Association and British Medical Journal, Museum, 5891, 9562, 9828, and 5954 (internal exchange, four lines).

The TELEGRAPHIC ADDRESSES are:


FINANCIAL SECRETARY and BUSINESS MANAGER, (Advertisements, etc.), Articulate, West, London.

MEDICAL SECRETARY, Medina, West, London.

The address of the Irish Office of the British Medical Association is No. South Frederick Street, Dublin (telegrams: Mercator, Dublin; telephone: 6550 Dublin), and of the Scottish Office, 5 Drumhalls Gardens, Edinburgh (telegrams: Associate, Edinburgh; telephone: 6361 Edinburgh).

Queries and Answers.

Hyperplasia of the legs.

"P. A. R. K." asks for advice in the treatment of a general enlargement of the soft tissues of the legs from the knees to the ankles. The patient is a woman, aged 34, who is otherwise healthy; she is slightly built and tall, and the legs are a great deal larger than normal. The condition is of several years' duration, and is attributed to severe chilblains on the legs, caused by repeated chilling of the feet and legs for long periods, followed on each occasion by standing in front of a fire, resulting in oedema, and the skin is healthy. There are no varicose veins, nor is there any oedema of the feet and ankles, nor flat-foot; the feet are not affected. The condition is practically symmetrical. Massaging, Scholl's baths, artificial sunlight, and manipulation by an osteopath ("in case the ankle bone was displaced") have been tried without effect.

Scalp itching.

"Puzzled" asks for advice as regards the treatment of a case of intense irritation of the scalp. The itching is confined to the top of the scalp, and there is no dermatitis to account for it. The patient is a 16-year-old girl, who has been lately employed; she complains of irritation of the eyes and throat, which she attributes to her work. The ink used contains in neutral solution castor oil, commercial sodium lactic acid, boracic acid, and stearic acid; there is a fair amount of jaundice. Beyond scurf and a small spot of purple on the head, probably caused by the frequent washing, there seems to be no reason for the condition. Bromides have been tried with little success.

Health and duplicating machines.

"G. O. C." asks whether any evidence that the constant use of a duplicating machine is prejudicial to health. He has a teleprinter, who is thus employed; she complains of irritation of the eyes and throat, which she attributes to her work. The ink used contains in neutral solution castor oil, commercial sodium lactic acid, boracic acid, and stearic acid; there is a fair amount of jaundice. Beyond scurf and a small spot of purple on the head, probably caused by the frequent washing, there seems to be no reason for the condition. Bromides have been tried with little success.

Income tax.

Cash Receipts Paid to Outgoing Partner.

"G. O. C." joined a firm on January 1st, 1927, taking over the share of an outgoing partner. The firm's liability for income tax is based on cash receipts and cash payments; "G. O. C." paid a "share" of the tax, therefore, is affected by the amount of the debts collected and handed over, not to himself, but to his predecessor. Is this correct?

Yes. The clue to the puzzle is that "G. O. C." is liable in respect of his share of the fees earned by the firm, whether they are received or outstanding. Theoretically the firm's liability should be based on gross debits, less an allowance estimated to cover losses by non-payment. Presumably, in the long run, that basis would yield the same result as taking the cash receipts, and as the amount of the latter is easily calculated and does not involve any arbitrary estimate, it is a clearly preferable. The tax that "G. O. C." paid for 1927-28 he paid for the earnings of that year, not for the cash received, and if he had left the partnership subsequent receipts would simply have represented the gathering in of income on which he had paid tax.

That, of course, is the present position of his predecessor.

"G. O. C."'s "accountant's reference to business profits is not understood; such profits are seldom, if ever, calculated on any basis but that of the book debts.

Letters, Notes, etc.

Anomal Pigmentation of the Scalp.

Dr. P. PARKES WEBER (London, W.), writes: With reference to the note by Dr. E. A. Cockayne, on September 29th (p. 595), I would suggest that the rare "black locks" of the hairy scalp to which he alludes add to the déplaisant effects to simple pigment naevi of the skin of any part of the body, whereas the "white locks" of the scalp (in regard to which Dr. Cockayne refers to the well-known White family tradition) are strictly analogous to simple achromatic naevi of any part; in fact, they constitute a form of congenital alopecia. But without knowing the exact history of any particular case of "white locks," the difficulty is to be sure that they are not of the kind that often follow patches of sallow areas. Moreover, patches of white hair on the head (and sometimes patches of alopiecia areata) may be associated with, and in fact constitute a form of, what is the commonest cause of leucodermic patches in general.

TREATMENT OF CANCER BY INJECTIONS OF PERITONEAL

FLUID.

P. S. D. (Melbourne, Australia), writes: In your issue of July 14th (p. 86) I referred to a man with malignant disease of the stomach who had been receiving injections of differentiated blood subjected to irradiation by the ultra-violet rays. His treatment started on March 22nd, and my note on June 3rd was, "I am eating minced lamb, liver and bacon, minced chicken. Does not appear to affect me so knocked out as he was before the two weeks for some reason his prostate enlarged and caused the use of a catheter." He has great application caused the subsidence of this in two weeks, enabling him to urinate freely. About this time an enlarged gland appeared in the right groin; although at first quite soft, and not suggestive of malignancy, yet by the middle of August this was decided hard and obviously malignant, and at the same time an enlarged lymph gland occurred in the abdominal part; the middle of June the weight gradually began to decline and more difficulty was experienced in taking food and retaining it, till the middle of August, when it was seen that the disease had most assuredly closed up, and nothing was retained, even fluids being returned as soon as swallowed. At the present time he is slowly slowing to death, but it is necessary for me to do as far possible. In another case of exactly the same type similar treatment has been given; the patient, while gaining ground for some time, has developed oedema of legs and ankles and still able to take a fair amount of food. Two other cases not malignant but down and out, without any definite disease being diagnosed, have been receiving similar injections, and have gained weight considerably. My own observations are such that I feel that somebody working with available time and the results of different dosage—dose of irradiated blood or peritoneal fluid, time of exposure to light, distance of lamp, and of concentration by various methods—ought to be able to produce the same effects. We are dealing with powerful rays, and as I know these facts we cannot hope to get satisfactory results.

Medical Prayer Union.

In reply to an inquiry by "M. B.," the honorary secretary, Dr. C. J. B., Lancing, Coombe, Leyton, E., writes: The Medical Prayer Union arranges for meetings occasionally in the homes of members in the central part of London, and organizes two medical missionary breakfasts each year, one especially for medical students in London in May and the other at the meeting of the British Medical Association in July.

Medical Periodicals.

A member tells us that he has sets of bound volumes of medical periodicals which he would be willing to present to a library if the cost of carriage is paid by the recipient. The sets are, British Medical Journal, 1883 to 1900; Lancet, 1895 to 1903; Clinical Journal, 1891 to 1900. The volumes are all in good condition.

A Correction.

The address of the Registrar of the National University of Ireland is 49, Morris Street, Dublin, as given in our Educational Number on September 1st (p. 390).

Vacancies.

NOTIFICATIONS of places vacant in universities, medical colleges, and of vacant resident and other appointments at hospitals, will be found at pages 47, 54, 152, and 51. All columns, and advertisements to partnerships, assistantships, and locumtenancies at pages 50 and 51.

About one note notified in the advertisement column appears in the Supplement at page 155.