Letters, Notes, and Answers

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QuERIES AND ANSWERs

Erythema of Eyelids

Dr. W. A. Muir writes: A girl of 18 is subject to redness of eyelids, especially after spending a day out in the open. She has been subject to this for some years. General health is good. Ung. hyd. ex. flav. and optrex have been tried without much success. Can any reader make suggestions for treatment?

Chronic Muco-purulent Otorrhea

Dr. F. C. Collinson (Rotherham) writes: I wonder if any of your readers could help me with suggestions in the treatment of a case of middle otorrhea, thick muco-purulent discharge going on for months. There is a large perforation in each drum; the discharge is loaded with diphtheria bacilli of a non-virulent character. The patient is very fit now, though he had an artificial pneumothorax and was in a sanatorium for a long time. The ear condition is undoubtedly due to an attack of measles he had when a child. The treatment has been keeping the ears as dry as possible, douching with antisepsic, electric treatment, and diphtheria antitoxin. Up to now no improvement has taken place so further discharge is concerned, and he is certainly somewhat deaf.

Muscular Twitchings

Dr. E. J. Bowmer (Liverpool) writes in reply to "H." (November 25, p. 1072), who asked for suggested treatment to control general twitching of the muscles: I have had several cases of generalized twitching associated with tremors which appears to be of the Parkinsonian type with rapid polyphonic voice, restless legs, a tremor of the fingers, irregular movements of arms, and twitching of the facial muscles. While there is little hope of arresting the progress of the disease in these senile cases, I have found that they respond well to administration of genocapolamine granules, one to two t.d.s., p.c. The preparation is the amido-oxide of scopoline prepared by Lab. Amido.

A Historic X-ray Apparatus

Dr. Geoffrey A. Hoffman writes from Cranham, Gloucester: With reference to Dr. R. T. Gunther’s inquiry under the above heading (November 25, p. 1072), I am doubtful of the correctness of Captain E. G. Spencer-Churchill’s statement. On Professor Roentgen’s discoveries of x-rays in 1896 my uncle, the late Dr. J. Hall-Edwards of Birmingham, at once became keenly interested in the subject. In February of that year he produced the first radiograph taken outside London and the first radiograph of the spine. The first operation in this country as a direct outcome of the application of the rays was made from one of his negatives. I am of the opinion that Dr. Hall-Edwards equipped a portable apparatus for use in warfare, and, in addition, on the outbreak of the Boer War in South Africa he became attached to the Imperial Yeomanry Hospital as surgeon radiographer under the leadership of Sir Alfred Newall. In an article written by himself he states that he dealt with 120 cases in the hospital at Deelfontein in the first five months alone, and gives an interesting account of it.

Income Tax

New Partnership—Old Debts

"PERU" refers to a reply in our issue of April 29 last, and inquires whether he has been right in acquiescing in the bringing into the firm of the British Medical Journal of the fact of any accounts having been issued to the present partnership before the present partnership came into being.

The reply quoted referred to different circumstances. In that case the former proprietor had retired, his professional earnings had ceased, and there was no question of his being assessable for subsequent years as a practitioner. In "PERU" ’s case he is still chargeable in respect of professional earnings. None the less he could have declined the old receipts brought into the new firm of accountants, but in that case the inspector of taxes would have rightly claimed that the cash receipts were not a fair index of the gross earnings of the practice, and would have insisted on the basis of bookings less an allowance for bad debts. Rather than become involved in the inconveniences of that method of computation most practitioners prefer to adhere to the cash receipts basis, even with the necessity of following is, that all receipts be brought in, whatever their destination.

Honorary Appointment Expenses

"R. H." was, before the war, doing honorary work for a London hospital which entailed travelling once a week between London and the provincial town where he lives. Can he deduct the expenses so incurred?

"R. H." was in general practice. We think that the Inland Revenue authorities would not object to the merging of the travelling expenses in those of the practice—would certainly be done if "R. H." had been receiving a small fee for his services. But it is clear that he cannot deduct those expenses from other earnings—for example, from his pay, etc., as an officer in the R.A.M.C.

LETTERS, NOTES, ETC.

Treatment of Angina and Hyperpiesia

Dr. H. W. Hales (Bedfordshire), with reference to the leading article in our issue of November 4 (p. 915) on the drug treatment of angina and hyperpiesia, writes: I have had no small measure of success in both angina and hyperpiesia with a combination of colonic lavage with potassium permanganate and a diet reduced for some days to water and then to oranges and grapefruit only for some weeks. I do not know whether the results may be attributed to the potassium or the manganese ion, but it is certainly obtained when this salt is used for colonic lavage and not obtained when other salts are employed.

Calendars and Diaries

The high quality of the calendars and diaries produced by John Walker and Co., Ltd. (5 and 6, Warvich Street, London, E.C.4) remains unchanged despite war-time conditions. The bindings of the samples sent to us display the same attractiveness as in former years, and the prices of the diaries range from 1s. upwards.

The Dental Manufacturing Company Ltd. (Brock House, 97, Great Portland Street, W.1) have issued their diary of appointments for 1940. It contains, as usual, space for half-hourly appointments, a week's appointments being visible at an opening, and much information of interest to dental practitioners. The detachable finger-indexed address book must be a great convenience to those using the diary; its price (plain edition) is 6s. 6d., postage 6d. extra.

Chocolates for Christmas

Samples of Messrs. Cadbury’s well-known goods have been sent to us, and we are informed that in addition to making chocolate for the men and women in the Forces and for Civil Defence workers, chocolate boxes for Christmas presents will be available as usual. Prices of the gift boxes and caskets range from 6d. to 40s., and there are supplies of the varieties obtainable all the year round.

Corrigendum

Dr. W. Newton Chalmers (Kirkcudbright) points out that the legend under Fig. 1 in the article by Mr. Philip Wiles on "Fractures of the Femur" (J. Med. Soc., 1939, 11, 920) is incorrect. It should read, "Adduction fracture with upward displacement and external rotation"—not "internal rotation."