

BETEL-CHEWER'S CANCER.

To the Editor, THE INDIAN MEDICAL GAZETTE.

SIR,—As a rejoinder to the article which appeared in your issue for January, 1925, on the causation of betel-chewer's cancer, the following facts may perhaps be cited.

Buccal cancer is quite common among people who do not chew betel, so it is not safe to assume that the lime in the chewing mixture is the sole agent responsible. Even in methods of preparing and taking the chewing mixture there are variations in different parts of the country. In Malabar a quarter of a betel leaf, with a few grains of lime (*chunam*) smeared on it, and two or three fragments of areca nut forms the initial part of the "chew." After this mixture has been well chewed a piece of tobacco—some 2 to 6 drachms in amount—is then put into the mouth and kept with the original bolus in one corner of the mouth. Some will keep the "chew" in the mouth for only a few minutes, others for hours.

In the Tamil districts in South India, the "chew" differs considerably. Some take a dozen or two betel leaves with some two drachms of *chunam*, and insert the leaves one after another, smeared with *chunam*, into the mouth, which already contains about half an ounce of areca nut shavings; they do not usually use tobacco. Others use tobacco, but in very small quantities. In Malabar the addition of tobacco is universal amongst male members of all castes, and among all females—with the exception of Brahmins. In Tanjore and other Tamil districts both sexes of all castes, except Brahmins, add tobacco. Only a few Brahmin males however use tobacco.

On the Malabar side cancer is more common than in Tanjore and its adjacent Tamil districts. Buccal cancer is very rare among Brahmin ladies, though they chew more often and in more quantity than others. In Tanjore cancer is rarer among Brahmins of both sexes than amongst non-Brahmins.

Tobacco is a plant in universal and world-wide use. May it not have something to do with the incidence of buccal cancer? In clay-pipe smoker's cancer, may it not be the tobacco and not the pipe which is the cause? The irritant properties of *chunam* may have little or nothing to do with buccal cancer. Further, there is a custom in some parts of Southern India for people to insert a long piece of tobacco into the rectum to relieve constipation. A male patient recently consulted me who had cancer of the rectum; he gave a history of having frequently inserted a piece of tobacco some two inches in length into the rectum for the previous 15 years, in order to secure a daily evacuation of the bowels.

In brief, it seems to me that tobacco may be the element to be incriminated in the betel-chewer's mixture.—Yours, etc.,

M. A. KRISHNA IYER, L.M.P.

ALIPURAM JAIL, BELLARY.
8th January 1926.

A FORMULA FOR INTRAVENOUS IODINE.

To the Editor, THE INDIAN MEDICAL GAZETTE.

SIR,—I read with much interest the notes on the treatment of pneumonia and of cellulitis in your issue for last December by my friend, Dr. S. N. Datta, L.M.P. I would like to mention, however that the following solution, which was advocated by Colonel Jeudwine in your issue for December 1923, appears to be less irritant and more useful than the use of the tincture:—

R Potassium iodide	36 grains.
Iodine, pure	24 grains.
Distilled water to	1 oz.

Dose; 1 to 2 c.c. diluted with 8 c.c. of distilled water. Each c.c. of the above solution contains one grain of iodine.

As a rule injections need not be given on alternate days; once a week is usually sufficient. I have tried

these injections with admirable results in cases of pneumonia, pleurisy, cellulitis, septic wounds, chronic bronchitis, carbuncle and rheumatism, and my notes on "The Treatment of Carbuncle by Intravenous Iodine" appeared in the *Indian Medical Journal* for September, 1925.

I tried the same treatment in two cases of phthisis, but the results were disappointing; both patients died.

I am indebted to my chief, Dr. E. A. Goldie, M.B., B.S. (Lond.), for useful suggestions in connection with this method of treatment.—Yours, etc.,

M. BAROOA, L.M.P.

DIBRUGARH, ASSAM,
8th January 1926.

Service Notes.

THE NEW DIRECTOR-GENERAL, INDIAN MEDICAL SERVICE.

We have to congratulate Major-General T. H. Symons, C.S.I., O.B.E., K.H.S., I.M.S., formerly Surgeon-General with the Government of Madras, upon his appointment as Director-General, Indian Medical Service, with effect from the 1st April, 1926.—EDITOR, I.M.G.

APPOINTMENTS AND TRANSFERS.

The services of Lieutenant-Colonel T. H. Gloster, M.B., I.M.S., an officer of the Medical Research Department are placed at the disposal of the Government of Madras, with effect from the afternoon of the 28th January 1926, for appointment as officiating Director, Pasteur Institute, Coonoor.

Lieutenant-Colonel A. B. Fry, C.I.E., D.S.O., M.D., I.M.S., Professor of Hygiene, School of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene, Calcutta, is appointed to act as Principal, Medical College, Calcutta, in addition to his own duties, with effect from the 20th October 1925, *vice* Lieutenant-Colonel F. A. F. Barnardo, C.I.E., C.B.E., M.D., F.R.C.S.E., I.M.S., granted leave.

Lieutenant-Colonel N. M. Wilson, O.B.E., I.M.S., is appointed temporarily to officiate as Civil Surgeon, Simla West, with effect from the date on which he takes over charge from Lieutenant-Colonel Hallilay and until Lieutenant-Colonel Jeudwine's return from leave.

In modification of previous orders, Lieutenant-Colonel H. Hallilay, M.B., I.M.S., is appointed temporarily to officiate as Civil Surgeon, Simla (West), up to the 28th February 1926, or the date on which he is relieved by Lieutenant-Colonel Wilson.

Major H. Hingston, M.D., I.M.S., First Resident Surgeon, Presidency General Hospital, Calcutta, is appointed to act as Professor of Clinical Medicine, Medical College, Calcutta, and Second Physician, College Hospital, with effect from the 1st November 1925, *vice* Major J. D. Sandes, M.D., F.R.C.P.I., I.M.S.

Major J. D. Sandes, M.D., F.R.C.P.I., I.M.S., officiating Professor of Clinical Medicine, Medical College, Calcutta, and Second Physician, College Hospital, is appointed to act as Professor of Medicine of the said institution, and First Physician, Medical College Hospital, with effect from the 1st November 1925, *vice* Lieutenant-Colonel F. A. F. Barnardo, C.I.E., C.B.E., M.D., F.R.C.S.E., I.M.S., granted leave.

Major E. W. O'G. Kirwan, M.B., F.R.C.S.I., I.M.S., is appointed to act as Professor of Ophthalmic Surgery, Medical College, Calcutta, and Ophthalmic Surgeon, College Hospital, *vice* Lieutenant-Colonel W. V. Coppinger, D.S.O., I.M.S., going on leave.

Major S. S. Sokhey, I.M.S., is appointed temporarily to the Medical Research Department and posted as supernumerary officer at the Haffkine Institute, Bombay, with effect from the 18th August 1925. His services are placed at the disposal of the Government of Bombay for employment as officiating Assistant Director of the Institute, with effect from the date on which he assumes charge of the duties of the appointment.