

THE BOSTON Medical and Surgical Journal

Established in 1812

An independently owned Journal of Medicine and Surgery published weekly under the direction of the Editors and an Advisory Committee, by the BOSTON MEDICAL AND SURGICAL JOURNAL SOCIETY, INC.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 28, 1916

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An editor will be in the editorial office daily, except Sunday, from twelve to one-thirty p. m.

Papers for publication, and all other communications for the Editorial Department, should be addressed to the Editor, 126 Massachusetts Ave., Boston. Notices and other material for the editorial pages must be received not later than noon on the Saturday preceding the date of publication. Orders for reprints must be returned in writing to the printer with the galley proof of papers. The Journal will furnish one hundred reprints free to the author, upon his written request.

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PHYSICIANS AND THE INCOME TAX.

ON January 1, 1917, Massachusetts embarks on a new method of assessing taxes. Hereafter, returns are compulsory and heavy penalties await the dodger. It is safe to say that at least 90% of the physicians and surgeons in Massachusetts will come within the scope of at least one of the four new taxes, and so must file returns on or before March 1, 1917.

Blanks and instruction booklets may be obtained from the Tax Commissioner's office, Income Tax Division, State House, Boston, or from the District Income Tax offices throughout the State or from any banking institution.

Broadly speaking, and with some exceptions, those forms of investments which have been tax exempt in the past continue to be so in the future, and such intangibles as have been taxed heretofore are now to be fixed at the rate of 6% of the dividend or interest yield actually received in 1916. Annuities are taxed at the rate of 1½% and the excess of actual, realized gains

over losses in the purchase and sale of intangibles is to be taxed at 3%.

Contrary to the general impression, there is no minimum exemption in these three taxes. If the taxpayer has received any income, no matter how little, from such taxable sources he must make the return.

The fourth tax is at the rate of 1½% of the excess over \$2000 of net income from profession or business. Wife, children or dependent parents may entitle the taxpayer to an exemption up to \$3000.

Partners, executors, trustees and other fiduciaries all come within the scope of the act. Although the law is necessarily as complicated as is our complex civilization, nevertheless it is believed to be as scientific and equitable as any tax law in the United States.

For his own protection it is particularly vital that the taxpayer also file with the local city or town assessors a list of his tangible personal property. This list, however, will not contain any of the items included in the return to the State as all property paying a tax on the basis of income escapes all other State or local tax. Absolute secrecy will surround the returns filed with the State, and there will be no penalty for evasions prior to January 1, 1917, but after that date the law will be strictly enforced.

As this is but a bare outline of the law, the reader is urged to obtain the instruction booklet, and make his return as soon after January 1st as may be, and, of course, not later than March 1, 1917.

JOSEPH E. PERRY,
Income Tax Attorney.

MASSACHUSETTS COMMISSION ON SOCIAL INSURANCE.

THE issue of the JOURNAL for December 21, which was published as a contribution to the discussion of industrial health insurance and other pending forms of social legislation, was issued two days in advance of its date in order that it might be in the hands of members of the Massachusetts Medical Society and other readers prior to the special meeting of the Council of the Massachusetts Medical Society held at the Boston Medical Library on December 20. A report of the proceedings of this meeting will be published in the next issue of the JOURNAL.