

REVIEW OF REVIEWS

QUACK MEDICINES AND TUBERCULOSIS

The following "consumption cures" are listed among several quack remedies exposed as frauds in one of the latest numbers of "Hygeia", the Health Magazine of the American Medical Association:

Addiline.—The Addiline Company of Columbus, Ohio, sold this product at \$5.50 a bottle. It consisted of a few cents' worth of kerosene and turpentine, with a small amount of aromatic oil. The chemists who analyzed the stuff expressed the opinion that it might make a good furniture polish.

Balzone (Vitalis System).—A quack, one N. L. Waelchli, exploited Balzone from Denver. Later he moved to Chicago and sold his "cure" as the Vitalis System. Waelchli is an ex-service man who claims to have cured himself of tuberculosis in 1920. Official records, however, show that, in 1928, Waelchli was still accepting compensation from the United States Veterans' Bureau. Balzone was, essentially, a little colored water containing a few drops of some volatile oil, similar to pine oil. The instructions were to bring the water to a boil and inhale the steam.

Nature's Creation.—This nostrum was said to have been brought into existence by one H. W. Campbell and a Mrs. J. M. Reynolds. The formula was Mrs. Reynolds', whom Campbell is said to have discovered telling fortunes in a Chicago basement. Campbell and Reynolds formed a company, first known as the H. W. Campbell of Chicago and, later, as Nature's Creation Company of Columbus, Ohio. From Chicago the stuff was exploited as a cure for syphilis; from Columbus, it was a cure for consumption. An investigation of the cases of persons who had taken Nature's Creation disclosed that scores of them were dead, as were also a number of those who wrote testimonials and whose pictures were published by the Nature's Creation Company. When analyzed in the chemical laboratory of the American Medical Association, the preparation was found to be a solution of potassium iodide in alcohol and water, with some vegetable extractives and flavoring matter. Later, Nature's Creation was exploited by another quack, Ralph L. Marer, and in December, 1925, the postal authorities debarred Nature's Creation from the mails.

Brown's New Consumption Remedy.—A negro, D. H. Brown, operated this fraud from Jacksonville and St. Augustine, Fla., swindling unfortunate consumptives of his own race. The nostrum was declared a fraud under the Food and Drugs Act and Brown was fined. He then removed the fraudulent claims from the trade package, so as to be exempt from the national law, but continued to make them in newspapers and circulars. Then Brown changed his trade name to Magnolia Remedy Company and a fraud order was issued against Brown and his company. This was in effect for about three years, when Brown filed an affidavit declaring that he had absolutely abandoned his scheme and would not engage in any such activities in the future. As a matter of fact, Brown continued to sell his fake under still another name, Creoco Remedy Company. The postal authorities in due time simply extended the fraud order to cover the new name. The stuff was merely a compound of creosote and malt extract.

Pulmonol.—A. V. Payne, M. D., quack, exploited Pulmonol under the trade name Pulmonol Chemical Company, New York City. Investigation of some of the testimonials published by Payne brought out the fact that persons who had given them were dead, and had died of consumption. In one case, Payne continued to publish the testimonial of a woman even after her death and over the protest of the dead woman's daughter. Pulmonol was analyzed, both by the chemists of the American Medical Association and by the federal chemists. It was found to be a solution of benzoate of soda, a guaiacol salt and a little strychnine in glycerin and water, colored with a coal-tar dye. The federal authorities declared the stuff a fraud.

Wright Tuberculosis Treatment.—This was sold by the so-called Carrie Wright T. B. Foundation at Corinth, Miss. When analyzed by the chemist of the American Medical Association, Mrs. Wright's alleged cure was found to be a mixture of water, glycerin and burnt sugar.

CALMETTE-GUERIN VACCINE AGAINST TUBERCULOSIS

The following editorial about BCG appeared in the January issue of the "American Journal of Public Health":

"Attempts at vaccination against tuberculosis are not new, but all of them up to the present have been failures, though in laboratories certain experiments have had definitely successful results, among which we may mention those in this country by Pearson and Gilliland, at the University of Pennsylvania. In practice,

however, we know of no method, either in animals or in man, which has been generally successful, though the laboratory work referred to has been sufficient to keep us hoping and to make us believe that someone will solve the problem in the not far distant future.

"For a number of years we have followed eagerly the experiments of Calmette and Guérin, who succeeded in reducing the virulence of a mammalian tubercle bacillus through more than twenty years of cultivation upon a medium containing bile. After four years of such cultivation, it had lost its virulence for cattle, and after thirteen for all experimental animals, though inoculated animals would react to the tuberculin test, and the germ itself would produce tuberculin. The ability and scientific honesty of Calmette, with his persistence and experience, have given unusual interest to his reports, the most recent and extensive of which are found in his book, published in 1927, and in the current volume of the *Annals of the Pasteur Institute*.

"As far as the vaccination of animals goes, we have two recent and authoritative reports. The first gives a series of experiments with guinea pigs. When the infecting dose was reduced to its lowest effective limit, the vaccinated animals were shown to live longer than the unvaccinated, and 6 of the vaccinated, when killed twenty weeks after the death of the last unvaccinated animal, were found to be free from tuberculosis. The authors feel justified in believing that guinea pigs may be completely protected against minimum doses of virulent tubercle bacilli by means of BCG. Experiments upon guinea pigs, rabbits and young calves at the Research Laboratories of the Department of Agriculture of Canada do not give such favorable results. In a pathogenicity test of BCG made on 134 guinea pigs, 92 were without a trace of tuberculosis when killed, while 30 showed infection, which in some cases appeared active and in others arrested or undergoing resorption. In the early experiments, 6 died of tuberculosis. The authors concluded that the vaccine could not be considered free of pathogenic power, and further showed that the virulence could be exalted by serial passage through guinea pigs; results which are in serious disagreement are those reported by Calmette, Guérin and others. The same workers found that young calves which after vaccination were exposed to natural infection by living with tuberculin reacting cows showed no greater resistance than the controls.

"The authors consider that vaccination with BCG is still in the experimental stage, and that the claims made for its harmlessness are open to question.

"In 1927, Calmette made an important modification in his vaccination of calves; namely, isolating them from possible infection for thirty days after vaccination, which indicated that his former procedure had not been entirely satisfactory.

"These experiments have a direct bearing on the use of BCG for the protection of children. Calmette and his coworkers report on 3,808 children and compare the deaths among these—3.1 per cent—with the general rate of mortality for the first year of life in France for 1922, which was 8.5 per cent. This report has been severely criticised. One is almost forced to believe that the favorable reports of the authors show an undue degree of optimism.

"The most that we feel justified in saying is that the whole matter is in the experimental stage, but is in the hand of competent and experienced observers. It may be true, as some claim, that the use of BCG carries danger to infection to the child. Especially in view of the dissociation into two types, one virulent

for guinea pigs and the other not, demonstrated by Petroff, we are obliged to hold that the safety of the procedure has not been proved, and for the present must recommend caution in the use of the vaccine while hoping for the best."

INFLUENCE OF CEREAL DIET ON INFANT GROWTH IN THE TROPICS

The following conclusions were arrived at by V. B. Appleton, of Honolulu, Hawaii, after a study on "the effect of high cereal diets on the growth of infants":

"The growth and development of 1,200 Japanese and 869 Filipino infants in Hawaii were observed during the first two years of life. The diet of both races is high in rice and lacks milk, and the infants are breast fed. Three hundred and seventy-nine Hawaiian infants were also examined for skeletal development.

"A diet abundant in cereal without milk is compatible with a high birth rate, moderate infant mortality and good growth of the offspring during lactation for the first five months of life, when the infants are dependent on breast milk alone, if the mother's diet includes suitable, adequate, supplementary food other than milk. After six months, when the infants have reached the age when additional food is needed, the gain in weight is not so rapid as when cow's milk is used as a supplementary food in the diet of infants.

"Carpal centers develop early in the infants in Hawaii.

"The subtropical location of the Hawaiian Island provides sufficient ultra-violet rays in the sunlight to give almost complete protection against rickets, even when the diet of lactating mothers and of infants under two years of age does not contain milk. Rickets is extremely rare and is mild when it occurs.

"The eruption of deciduous teeth occurs early in Japanese and in Filipino infants. It is earlier for the Japanese than for the Filipino infants."

—*American Journal of Diseases of Children*. Vol. 37, No. 2.

PRECAUTIONS AGAINST INFLUENZA

The conference called by the Surgeon General to discuss the recent influenza epidemic which swept the United States, met in Washington on January 10, 1929. The committee on preventive measures made the following recommendations on the public precautions that should be taken to avoid the epidemic in the communities not reached by it:

"1. Efforts should be made to reduce the opportunities for direct contact infection by avoiding crowds.

"2. Schools or colleges should not be closed wherever adequate medical and nursing supervision is available and provision is made for the prompt exclusion of all persons showing suspicious catarrhal symptoms, especially when these are associated with a rise of temperature.

"3. The reopening of boarding schools and colleges after vacation should not be encouraged in the presence of epidemic influenza unless there are generous accommodations for the bed care of those who may be attacked.

"4. While the general closing of places of public assemblage is to be deprecated, there may be local conditions justifying such action at the discretion of the local health authorities.

"5. In groups which can be brought under daily professional inspection, the isolation of early and suspicious cases of acute respiratory tract infection, particularly when these are accompanied by a rise in temperature, may result in delaying the spread of the diseases.

"6. In isolated communities and in institutions, infection may be delayed and sometimes avoided by the strict exclusion of visitors.

"7. The person and sick room of an infected individual must be considered a definite focus of infection, and visitation to such persons or premises should be avoided by all persons except the necessary medical and other attendants."

—*Public Health Reports*, January 19, 1929.