The Propaganda for Reform

IN THIS DEPARTMENT APPEAR REPORTS OF THE JOURNAL'S BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION, OF THE COUNCIL ON PHARMACY AND CHEMISTRY AND OF THE ASSOCIATION LABORATORY, TOGETHER WITH OTHER GENERAL MATERIAL OF AN INFORMATIVE NATURE

CLEARO

A Fraudulent Consumption Cure Is Debarred from the Mails

"Clearo" was a "patent medicine" sold on the mail-order plan by one C. E. McCuiston, 612 Woodin Boulevard, Dallas, Texas, who did business under the trade name "The Clearo Company." McCuiston claimed that, when a young man, he was afflicted with tuberculosis and was cured by a simple herb medicine prepared by the Choctaw Indians. He claimed to have discovered what this herb was and how it was prepared and to have greatly improved the preparation. In the advertising matter, consisting of booklets, pamphlets and circulars, Clearo was held out as a cure for tuberculosis, asthma, bronchitis, hay fever and serious throat and lung troubles. Of course, the composition of Clearo was kept secret and the whole tenor of the representations made with respect to it was calculated to deceive persons into believing that Clearo had some mysterious virtues not possessed by other known drugs. These facts and the information that follows are contained in the memorandum of Judge John H. Edwards, Solicitor to the Post Office Department, in his memorandum to the Postmaster-General under date of June 23, 1922.

On April 21, 1922, the Clearo Company was ordered by the Post Office Department to show cause on or before May 16, why a fraud order should not be issued against it. No one connected with the concern appeared on the date named, nor was it represented by an attorney, but a written answer was filed by W. H. Hall of Dallas on behalf of the Clearo Company.

The postal authorities submitted specimens of Clearo to the Bureau of Chemistry for analysis and Dr. L. F. Kebler, Chief of the Drug Division of that Bureau, filed a report of the results of the examination of the preparation. According to Dr. Kebler, Clearo was an amber-colored, bitter liquid, containing over 98 per cent. water and alcohol with a trace of other volatile matter. The nonvolatile matter comprised only 1.92 per cent. of the total. The preparation contained traces of tannin and bitter plant principles, but no potent alkaloids. McCuiston claimed that part of the virtues of his nostrum resided in the volatile matter, but, as Dr. Kebler pointed out, the amount of volatile oil was a negligible quantity and could not possibly have any effect on the diseases set forth in the printed matter describing Clearo. The report showed that Clearo was of no value whatever in the treatment of tuberculosis.

In the written answer filed on behalf of the Clearo Company by W. H. Hall there was a copy of what purported to be a report and chemical analysis made of the alleged "Indian herb" said to be used in Clearo by one A. C. Herting of Camden, N. J., who styled himself "General Industrial, Experimental, Pharmaceutical, Bacteriological, Physiological, Analytical and Research Chemist." This "report" showed that the preparation contained tannin but admitted that it "contained no other medicinal constituents."

Judge Edwards' memorandum further states that the evidence showed that McCuiston personally compounded Clearo, although it failed to show that this man had ever had any training along medical lines such as to qualify him to engage in such work. The memorandum reproduces, as written, a letter from McCuiston from which it is obvious that the man "has very little education." In summing up the case against McCuiston, Judge Edwards says:

"The evidence shows that McCuiston is not in any way qualified to undertake the treatment of diseases that baffle the skill of the most expert medical scientists; that he has not discovered anything new or useful in the way of medi-

cine, but that this is just another of the many schemes that have been devised by unscrupulous mail-order promoters whereby persons suffering from dangerous diseases have been induced, by means of cleverly worded representations, to rely on such mail-order treatment, and thus lose precious time in obtaining proper treatment."

As a result of this investigation the Solicitor recommended that the Postmaster-General issue a fraud order against the Clearo Company because the concern was engaged in a "scheme for obtaining money through the mails by means of false and fraudulent pretenses, representations and promises." The fraud order was issued July 18, 1922.

Correspondence

CAPPER'S WEEKLY AND THE GREAT AMERICAN FRAUD

To the Editor:—An editorial appeared in the Fairmont (Minn.) *Daily Sentinel* for October 6 criticizing *Capper's Weekly*, the personal organ of Senator Arthur Capper from Kansas. On reading the senator's publication, one is shocked at the class of the medical advertising contained therein. Here is part of the *Sentinel's* editorial:

But our chief grievance against Senator Capper is not as a statesman and a legislator, but as a newspaper publisher and proprietor.

Capper's Weekly, Senator Capper's own personal organ, claims a circulation of 700,000. Senator Capper writes extensively for every issue, and it is touted as "a Champion of Human Welfare and the Square Deal." A recent issue before us contains a lengthy article, over a facsimile of the senator's signature, in which he expresses deep concern for boys and girls, and in chaste and beautiful English, gives advice which he hopes will save them from the allurements of a giddy life and impress them with the importance of studious self-denial and rectitude of conduct.

But in the same paper containing saintly precepts and homilies on right living, what do we find?

Column after column of the vilest, lowest, beastliest, most misleading, deceptive, dishonest and debauching advertisements of nostrums and alleged cures of diseases that are contained in any paper in the United States that is permitted to circulate through the mails.

There isn't a publisher in Minnesota so unscrupulous and grasping as to consider for a second any one of more than fifty advertisements that disgrace Senator Capper's paper and that have defiled its columns for more than a year.

The medicines and cure-alls that are advertised are grossly and cruelly false and delusive and have been black-listed and discredited by every reputable physician in the country.

They appeal only to the poor and ignorant, suffering from maladies which skill and science and accredited diagnosticians are competent to deal with.

Senator Capper is selling his name and fame to the dirty scoundrels who advertise these discredited concoctions which not only do no one a particle of good, but inflict upon the victims habits and appetites that inevitably lead to ruin and disgrace.

We declare in all earnestness that the class of advertising which the Capper paper contains should not only exclude it from the United States mails, but should ostracize it and its publisher from every respectable household. Any one who questions this statement is requested to procure a copy of the Capper paper and submit the advertisements it contains to a reputable physician.

According to the published rates of *Capper's Weekly* these advertisements bring Senator Capper a handsome fortune every month. What it brings the deluded victims would hardly dovetail with the paper's motto: "A Champion of Human Welfare."

This paper has no objection to Senator Capper's coming to our state to preach pure politics, but a man who is most shamefully and brazenly humbugging his innocent and confiding patrons is not entitled to the respect and consideration of honest voters.

The *Daily Sentinel* has for years refused such advertising as is referred to above and, to my knowledge, has turned down contracts that have amounted to thousands of dollars.

R. C. HUNT, M.D., Fairmont, Minn.
Secretary, Blue Earth Valley Medical Society.

[COMMENT.—The caustic comments of the Fairmont *Daily Sentinel* caused us to purchase some recent issues of *Capper's Weekly*. Cures for cancer, epilepsy, goiter, piles, asthma, the whisky habit, "rheumatism," baldness and rupture; "weak men" cures, a "Vacuo-Invigorator" ("instrument sent in plain wrapper") the "Bee Cell" uterine "supporter"—these are but a few of the fakes featured in this self-styled "National

Weekly of a Great Nation." According to the editorial page, "*Capper's Weekly* stands for a square deal for all"—and then advertises that if diabetics take "Eksip" they do not need to diet! "*Capper's Weekly* stands for making prohibition world-wide"—and advertises nostrums whose most potent ingredient is alcohol and containing from 15 to 18 per cent. of this ingredient! "*Capper's Weekly* stands for laws to prevent price gouging"—and advertises a nostrum, for making childbirth easier, containing a few cents' worth of oil and selling for a dollar and a quarter! "*Capper's Weekly* stands for the stripping of waste" from the public service—and perpetuates the most monstrous form of waste known to modern civilization, that of the iniquitous "patent medicine," and obtains no small proportion of its advertising receipts from such perpetuation.—Ep.]

DIAGNOSIS OF SYPHILIS FROM PRIMARY LESION

To the Editor:—There is a simpler and, I believe, no less efficient method of securing material from a syphilitic lesion for microscopic examination than that described by Dr. William D. Gill in *THE JOURNAL*, September 16, and that of Dr. J. B. H. Waring, described September 30. This method, which I have used and found satisfactory, is merely to use a test tube of appropriate size as a dry cup. The lesion is washed with water, and the surrounding skin left moist to secure adhesion. The dry tube, firmly held at its open end, is thoroughly heated and so applied immediately that its rim is in contact with the skin around the edges of the lesion. When the lesion is on the penis, the patient assists by drawing the skin taut with his thumbs, while his index fingers make counterpressure on the under surface of the organ. One may watch the result through the glass, and terminate it when a sufficient amount of serum has gathered or blood exudes. To obtain the secretion, a capillary tube is helpful. It is so drawn that one end is slightly expanded. The material is taken up into the narrow end; and while this is held over a slide, the expanded end is held in the flame until it fuses. The heated air within will then force the serum upon the slide. The tube should be about 4 inches (10 cm.) long.

MELVILLE SILVERBERG, M.D., San Francisco.

Queries and Minor Notes

ANONYMOUS COMMUNICATIONS and queries on postal cards will not be noticed. Every letter must contain the writer's name and address, but these will be omitted, on request.

TYPHOID VACCINATION BY MOUTH

To the Editor:—I am enclosing a clipping for comment. Typhoid and paratyphoid are quite common here, and it would be interesting to know whether there is any virtue in this article.

C. E. JUMPER, M.D., Torreón, Coahuila, Mexico.

ANSWER.—The clipping purports to describe the extensive trials of Besredka's method of vaccination by mouth recently made in the region of Neuville and Frémicourt in northern France, where typhoid was epidemic. This work was described in detail by Vaillant in the *Annales de l'Institut Pasteur* (February, 1922, p. 249), and reviewed by Besredka in the *Paris médical* (June 3, 1922, p. 463; abstr. *THE JOURNAL*, July 8, 1922, p. 165). Out of a total population of 2,000, 1,236 were inoculated against typhoid by the mouth with Besredka's *vaccin bilié*; 173 were vaccinated subcutaneously, and between 600 and 650 remained unvaccinated. Among the unvaccinated, 7.7 per cent. contracted typhoid fever, and 2.3 per cent. among those inoculated subcutaneously. Among the vaccinated by mouth, three developed the disease while vaccination was still in progress or immediately afterward, and two, or 0.17 per cent., ten days after completing the vaccination. Besredka's bile vaccine consists of a pill of bile and a tablet containing a mixture of heat-killed typhoid and paratyphoid

bacilli. These are taken three mornings in succession. Besredka states that this first trial of antityphoid vaccination by mouth was very encouraging. Dopter (*Paris médical*, June 3, 1922, p. 454), while granting that much, adds that it is for the future to determine whether the method has value.

HEMORRHAGIC MALARIA

To the Editor:—Will you be kind enough to explain: 1. What is the place assigned to the term "hemorrhagic malaria" in nosology? 2. In case there is such a disease, may it be mistaken for yellow fever?

X Y Z., Mexico.

ANSWER.—1. In the "Manual of the International List of Causes of Death" (Washington, 1922), "Hemorrhagic Malaria" is listed as one of the subheadings of the general title "Malaria." It is generally discussed in textbooks in the chapter on malaria, and is classified as blackwater fever, hemoglobinuric fever and malarial hemoglobinuria under the general heading of "Hemorrhagic Forms."

2. In the early stages of an epidemic of yellow fever, cases may be mistaken for malarial fever. The absence of early jaundice should be noted, as the color of the skin is rarely changed within four or five days, even in the most intense types of malarial infection. In hemorrhagic malaria the patient has usually had previous attacks of malaria. Hematuria is a prominent feature, while in yellow fever it is not frequent. Of course, examination of the blood for malarial parasites provides conclusive evidence.

Carter (Supplement 19 to *Public Health Reports*, Sept. 11, 1914) adds:

The differential diagnosis for malaria is, as a rule, fairly easy. Only do not lay too much stress on the plasmodia. If you do not find any plasmodia and the patient has not taken quinin, negatively the sign is of great value. Finding the plasmodium does not exclude yellow fever. . . . The time of onset is of some value. If the chill comes on in the night it is pretty certain not to be malaria, but if it comes in the daytime it does not exclude yellow fever. The facies is distinct from malaria. A man would be unwise to make a diagnosis on the facies in the first stage, although he ought to be able to say that it was not malarial fever, and if malarial fever were the only alternative he would certainly be suspicious of yellow fever and count it yellow fever from a sanitary aspect. The first year I was in Habana, Major Gorgas and I used to go over to Cabañas early every morning to look over the sick people in the barracks there, and we used to write out the diagnoses of the men as we saw them. We saw, then, in the morning those who sickened in the night, within the first twelve hours of illness, so practically our guide was the facies. We were mistaken quite often, but rarely between yellow fever and malarial fever. Malarial fever plus alcoholism was less easy to differentiate from yellow fever.

ARSENAURO

To the Editor:—Can you give me any information on a proprietary preparation called Arsenauero, manufactured by Parmele Pharmaceutical Company of New York? In handling a good many diabetics, I occasionally find one who has been taking this drug from recommendations of questionable source, in some instances to what I have thought was their detriment decidedly. The label on the bottle gives no information as to its formula, and directions are very indefinite, namely: "Take to the point of saturation."

Any information you can give me will be appreciated.

L. H. FUSON, M.D., St. Joseph, Mo.

ANSWER.—Arsenauero was widely advertised and had considerable vogue at one time. The preparation is similar in composition to "solution of gold and arsenic bromid," of the National Formulary. This contains bromid of gold (hydrogen bromaurate, HAuBr_2 and arsenic acid H_3AsO_4). Gold preparations were at one time believed to have therapeutic value, particularly as "alteratives." They have, however, proved inefficient and have been generally discarded. No preparation of gold has been admitted to "Useful Drugs" by the Council on Pharmacy and Chemistry, and we know of no good evidence that gold compounds are of value in the treatment of diabetes.

All Together.—Work falls flat, play and art become sterile, love and worship become conventional, unless there is originality, personal creation in each. I must do my job in my own way, find an individual outlet in the symbols of art or game, and an individual answer in love and prayer if I am to feel at home in the world. Yet this individual note is no cry in the void, because it claims brotherhood with all future and distant notes.—(Cabot, R. C.: *What Men Live By*, Boston, Houghton, Mifflin Company, 1914.)