

SOME ALLEGED TUBERCULOSIS CURES EXPLOITED THROUGH THE
MAILS.*BY L. F. KEBLER.¹

The manufacture of alleged tuberculosis cures is gradually becoming an unprofitable business. It has taken a long time to drive home the fact that no form of drug medication known at present will cure consumption. The medical profession has fully realized this fact for years, although occasionally inadvertent statements that certain agents are efficacious for the treatment of phthisis have been made. Many druggists are giving yeomen service in advising would-be purchasers not to use these alleged cures, but to consult a physician. Furthermore, many intelligent laymen now realize the worthlessness of drugs as curative agents for tuberculosis.

Nevertheless false and misleading advertisements still lead many victims of consumption to grasp at the straws offered by unscrupulous promoters of this class of medicinal preparations. Delays caused by using such products rob the unfortunate of golden days that might be used advantageously in the accepted treatment for consumption, with a good chance for regaining health and strength.

The death rate of tuberculosis has been greatly reduced during the last quarter of a century by the well-known treatment embodying hygiene, open air, enough wholesome food, rest, and peace of mind. The use of certain drugs for ameliorating certain symptoms is desirable and often beneficial.

Records of post mortems for all diseases show that from 75 to 90 per cent. of all cadavers so examined have had attacks of tuberculosis and recovered. Thus it is apparent that recovery without the use of drugs is the rule. Nevertheless there are few drugs known to mankind that have not been advocated as cures for this disease.

Formerly many alleged tuberculosis cures contained opium or morphine or some derivative thereof. Among these may be mentioned Tuberculozyne (heroin), Shiloh's Consumption Cure (opium), and East Indian Consumption Cure (morphine). Such products, however, are no longer available to the general public and it is doubtful whether they can be purchased in the United States.

Alleged consumption cures may be classed in three groups: (1) inhalation of gases or volatile agents; (2) internal medication; (3) a combination of groups 1 and 2.

The following preparations for which moneys have been received through the United States mails were examined in the Bureau of Chemistry, reported to the Post Office Department and action taken to put an end to their sale under the guise of consumption cures. As a result the various promoters concerned have either eliminated from all their advertising matter every reference to tuberculosis, both direct and indirect, by testimonials and otherwise, or else they have signed affidavits that they have gone out of business on a certain date, never to resume under any name and that their mail would be stamped as "refused" and returned to the senders. Fraud orders were issued in some cases and the several postmasters instructed to refuse delivery of all mail addressed to any name or names covered by the orders. Several cases were taken into court.

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INHALATION TREATMENTS.

Inhalations of various gases and volatile liquids for treating consumption have been in use for generations. Some physicians considered them efficacious in giving relief to patients; others believed that they possessed curative properties; and a few claimed to have actually cured some cases with them.

Only a few treatments depend on inhalation alone. Usually they include other forms of medication. The claim usually made for them is that the volatile drugs inhaled reach the remotest recesses of the lungs and kill the germs. Theoretically this is fine, but practically the attenuated gases inhaled into the lungs have no germicidal value. A patient would succumb before the tuberculosis germs could be destroyed in this way.

Thompson's Treatment (Texas).—In this smoke treatment wood was burned in a specially constructed stove, the fumes passed through prepared earth, and the gases were inhaled from an upper opening.

Ammonium Chloride Cure.—Ammonia and hydrochloric acid in gaseous form were brought together in a small container. The well-known visible cloud of ammonium chloride thus formed was inhaled through a suitably constructed device. The psychology in this case was a potent factor.

INTERNAL MEDICATION.

Internal medication is the commonest and probably the oldest method for the alleged curing of consumption.

Dr. Brown's New Consumption Remedy (Florida).—In 1916 this medicine was found to be a dark brown emulsion containing creosote, phosphoric acid, sodium phosphate, magnesium sulphate, glucose, sugar and a trace of some unidentified alkaloid. In 1922 it was a maltose syrup with creosote and a trace of Donovan's solution.

Clearo, the Indian Herb Treatment (Texas).—Analysis showed that it consisted of non-alkaloidal plant extractive (2 per cent.), alcohol (39 per cent. by volume) and water (59 per cent.).

Radam's Microbe Killer (Brooklyn).—This "standard internal germicide" and "universal cure for disease and consumption in particular" was a watery solution of sulphuric acid (about 1 per cent.) and sulphurous acid (from 0.01 to 0.03 per cent.). The solution was prepared by burning a mixture of sulphur, sodium nitrate, manganese dioxide, sandalwood and potassium chlorate and absorbing the gases in water.

Nature's Creation (Ohio).—This treatment consisted of a liquid and small brown tablets. The liquid was a hydroalcoholic solution of potassium iodide, sodium sulphate, sodium phosphate, sarsaparilla, licorice, senna and mezereum, flavored with oils of anise, sweet birch and sassafras. This is essentially sarsaparilla compound, U. S. P., with potassium iodide, sodium sulphate, sodium phosphate and senna, flavored with essential oils. The brown tablets were composed principally of aloes.

Vita (Louisiana).—This "Twentieth Century wonder killing all germs and microbes" and "cure for White Plague, commonly known as tuberculosis," consisted of water (96.8 per cent.) and potassium nitrate (3.1 per cent.), flavored with methyl salicylate and sassafras.

Addiline (Ohio).—Liquid petrolatum (62 per cent.), fixed oil (26 per cent.) and terebene (11½ per cent.) made up this "cure." One of the representations made was that this preparation would cause belching, when one of the ingredients (terebene) would find its way into the lungs where it exerted a direct effect on the tuberculosis germs.

Dad Parry's Vegetable Compound, Tuberculosis Cure (Pennsylvania).—The treatment consisted in taking in one dose an eight-ounce mixture of alcohol (20 per cent.), water (20 per cent.) and olive oil (60 per cent.), slightly flavored with some essential oil. The cure was supposed to be due to the flavoring used.

Eye Water Cure (Kansas).—One of the most unique treatments for consumption and other chronic disease, including gunshot wounds, was the one concocted by Professor Samuels. It was a watery solution of salt (about 5 per cent.) and sugar (about 5 per cent.). An ounce of it sold for \$5 to \$25. The solution was dropped into the eyes from which, it was claimed, the medication permeated the entire body, thus effecting the cures. The professor contested the case at every point. A fraud order was issued. The case was taken into court where the promoter was convicted and sentenced to a term in prison and a fine of \$5000 imposed. People who stated that they had been cured by this hydrant water solution of salt and sugar roundly berated the Government for denying them the use of this wonderful medicine. When the professor had served his term he applied to the Postmaster General to lift the fraud order so that he could reëngage in the business.

INHALATIONS AND INTERNAL MEDICATION COMBINED.

Sanosin (Illinois).—The United States Government unwittingly became an advocate of this alleged discovery of a German merchant traveling in Australia, through the publication in the Consular Reports of June 6, 1903, of a glowing account entitled "New Treatment for Tuberculosis." The mixture consisted of sulphur (70 per cent.), charcoal (20 per cent.) and eucalyptus oil (10 per cent.). The user was directed to heat, on a porous earthenware plate, which came with the preparation, a small tube of the mixture for a certain length of time in a closed room, and to inhale the gases evolved during a night's rest or a given length of time during the day. Tests showed that none of the charcoal was oxidized, that the oil was volatilized, and that a small quantity of the sulphur sublimed while about 0.2 per cent. was converted into sulphur dioxide. This quantity of sulphur dioxide in a room 10 by 10 by 10 feet would be rather dilute. On exposing typhoid and other germs for four hours in a closed chamber of a 1000 cubic feet capacity, in which the prescribed quantity of Sanosin was heated as directed, the germs were not destroyed. *Sanosin balsam*, which consisted of a fixed oil, menthol and oil of eucalyptus, was also sold to be applied locally.

Dr. Glass Inhalant Method (California).—The inhalant was alleged to contain beechwood creosote, oil of cassia, chloroform, tincture of iodine, pine tar, menthol, camphor, essential oil of mustard, carbolic acid, turpentine, and eucalyptus oil. The analyst found creosote, combined iodine, chloroform, alcohol, oil of eucalyptus and a vaseline-like residue on distillation. It was directed that from 20 to 30 drops of the inhalant be placed on a sponge, included in a mask-like device, the whole placed over the nose and mouth and inhalations made for about twelve hours during the day. The internal medication consisted of *tonic tablets*, containing

compounds of iron, quinine, and strychnine; *fever and chill tablets*, composed of acetylsalicylic acid flavored with methyl salicylate; and *constitutional tablets*, containing plant laxatives, flavored with oil of cinnamon.

The Inhalant Method Company (California).—The inhalant, 88 per cent. of which was volatile, was a dark liquid, containing alcohol, chloroform, creosote, combined iodine, oil of cinnamon, oil of eucalyptus, and some undetermined non-volatile matter. The methods of use and the internal medications were practically the same as those employed by Dr. Glass. In fact, this scheme had been almost bodily appropriated by a former employee of Dr. Glass who expressed himself rather bitterly at the hearing because he felt that the Government had called him to account but left these filching malefactors undisturbed. Dr. Glass found out later that he was mistaken in this respect.

Dr. Marshal Beaty's Aeriform Systemic Treatment (Ohio).—This was claimed to be a specific germicidal medication, consisting of inhalations and internal medicine. The doctor stated that it would cure germ diseases in general and tuberculosis in particular. The nasal inhalations were to be medicated by drawing air through an aqueous solution of sodium bicarbonate, creosote, camphor, menthol and eucalyptus oil. The internal medication, constituting a part of this treatment, consisted of (1) *cough and expectorant tablets*, containing sugar, menthol, licorice and starch; (2) *internal systemic tablets*, (a) cream-colored tablets, containing sugar, starch and unidentified bitter principle, (b) yellow tablets, containing sugar, starch, a bitter principle and plant tissue; (c) brown tablets, containing sugar, starch, a bitter principle and red oxide of iron; (3) *gargle and antiseptic mouth wash*, white tablets containing common salt, borax, starch and talc; (4) *anti-germ healine*, a petrolatum salve flavored with sassafras and colored with iodeosin.

PHARMACY AS PRACTICED IN CHINA.

BY HARVEY V. STOKELY.

The paper which follows was presented by Chairman Robert J. Ruth to the Section on Practical Pharmacy and Dispensing for Pharmacist Harvey V. Stokely. It was communicated in the form of a letter and accompanied by 14 kodak pictures; all of them have general interest; four of them are shown, namely, Stout Memorial Hospital, supported by the Southern Baptist Mission, one of the largest and best-equipped hospitals in South China. One of the buildings of Peking Union Medical College, which is the wonder of the Far East and doing great work along medical lines. The picture on the left, lower, shows a typical Chinese drug store and the staff; usually there are many apprentices who work without pay to learn "pidgin." The next picture shows part of the staff of the Isabella Fisher Memorial Hospital located at Tientsin and is supported by the Methodist Mission. Other "snap-shots," not shown, are as follows: the "Roanoke," a large speedy hospital boat of the Stout Memorial, used up and down the West River to give medical attention; another view of the Peking Union Medical College; Sompom life of the Chinese coolies; a Gorge trip in China; part of the Chinese Wall; Boat-House people of Hainan—they are not permitted to build on the ground, hence, live in houses built on poles. Other pictures will be explained in the body of the letter. Mr. Stokely is a classmate of Chairman Robert J. Ruth. The introductory remarks of the letter are omitted.—EDITOR.

"Pharmacy, as a profession, as well as that of medicine in China is suffering materially due to the fact that there are no laws which protect a qualified man against one not qualified. A college of pharmacy is very badly needed; as far as