

STATE DEPARTMENT: Messrs. J. K. Caldwell, Stewart J. Fuller, Max H. Hamilton.

UNITED STATES PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE: Dr. Walter L. Treadway, Dr. G. W. McCoy, Professor Claude S. Hudson, Mr. Selwyn D. Collins, Mr. Rollo H. Britten, Mr. R. D. Kinsey.

UNITED STATES VETERANS BUREAU: Dr. Joseph F. Barry.

WAR DEPARTMENT: Colonel J. B. Huggins, Lieutenant Colonel E. C. Jones.

The discussions were very instructive and will be commented upon more fully in later issues. They brought out the necessity for closer coöperation between the various groups charged by law with the importation, manufacture, distribution, dispensing and administration of narcotics and emphasized the extensive efforts being made to curtail the use of narcotics in illness and to replace them by non-habit forming drugs as rapidly as possible. It was interesting that the results of studies by the Public Health Service and the Committee on Drug Addiction in various representative communities in the United States, of the per capita legal consumption of narcotic drugs gave a total which compared quite closely with the annual importations which further confirmed the general expression of opinion that the diversion to illegitimate uses through legal channels was relatively small. The "ill-advised" use of narcotics in medical treatment and the use of exempt narcotic preparations without professional advice seemed to offer the best opportunities for reduction. Replacement, however, was the real and final objective and the almost complete disappearance of cocaine from dental practice and the elimination of heroin from medical practice were referred to as object lessons in replacement. The Committee on Drug Addiction, Division of Medical Sciences, National Research Council is directing research on twelve synthetic products which it is hoped will relieve pain without causing addiction and urge a combined effort toward "replacing every legitimate use of habit-forming drugs in medicine."

*The following six procedures were worked out by the conference:*

Complete analysis of hospital records, with a request that the American Medical Association coöperate in studying normal medical and scientific requirements.

Detailed scanning of prescriptions to determine ill-advised dispensation of narcotics.

Analysis of records of dispensing physicians.

Analysis, with the assistance of the AMERICAN PHARMACEUTICAL ASSOCIATION, of sale and use of so-called exempt preparations, sold for medical purposes, without prescriptions.

Field studies of morbidity and mortality with a view to forecasting tentatively the amount and character of sickness to be expected.

An educational program through physicians and their clientele, toward reducing the demand for narcotic drugs in illness.

It was announced that the Surgeon General would later on hold another conference on ways of carrying out the program.

That those present appreciated the responsibility resting upon them in connection with the legitimate use and further control of narcotics was evident and the fullest coöperation was pledged. The opinion was general that the objectives could not be reached by one effort but that the program must be a continuing one. It was clear that the method of approach employed by the Surgeon General had brought about better contacts and closer coöperation than has ever existed between the civil and government agencies dealing with legitimate narcotics.

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### A FATAL ERROR IN DISPENSING.\*

The following editorials from outstanding Kansas newspapers give their reaction to the conditions referred to:

(From *El Dorado Times*, R. A. CLYMER, Editor.)

"THE ARMY NEEDS GRADUATE PHARMACISTS."

"A court-martial in which the entire public should be interested is now in progress at Fort Leavenworth. Corp. Ralph E. Hawkins is charged with a violation of the ninety-third

\* See page 808, article by Chairman Robert L. Swain, of Committee on Pharmacy Corps, U. S. Army.

article of war, and testimony has tended to disclose that the accused man displayed gross negligence in compounding a prescription for two children who afterwards died from its effects. The children were those of enlisted men and each was afflicted with measles. Lieut. Jonathan Rigdon, a medical officer at the fort, prescribed for them.

"Col. Percy L. Jones testified on Tuesday, according to newspaper reports, that the accused man indicted, following the deaths of the children, that he had used atropine sulphate in powder form in compounding the prescription, rather than in tablet form. The damaging testimony of Colonel Jones was substantiated by that of Technical Sergeant Frank E. Baier who testified the accused man admitted to him that while he knew the drug was poisonous, he was not aware it was so dangerous as to make a difference, whether it was put up for dosage in tablet or powder form.

"Lieutenant Rigdon also is to be tried in connection with the case. His trial, originally set for July 28th, may be set over as a result of the unexpected length of the proceedings under which Hawkins is being tried. The charge against the officer is one of neglect of duty, because of his failure to respond to the call of the mother of one of the children after the drug was beginning to show its effects. The charge is not in connection with writing an improper prescription, since testimony brought out at the Hawkins trial has disclosed the prescription was correct and that its contents, properly compounded, probably would have aided the children.

"And so we have what appears to be, on the face of it, a glaring defect in the handling of medicines in the United States army medical service. The *Times* is informed that the medical corps does not think it necessary to have medicines dispensed by pharmacists. Under present practice, any available enlisted man, regardless of his qualifications, may be put to work compounding and dispensing prescriptions for the enlisted personnel and their families. In this case, it appears according to testimony, that an unqualified non-commissioned officer was detailed to do this important work and that his ignorance caused the death of two innocent infants. The medical officer ordered some tablets which contained a minute quantity of atropine sulphate. Not having the tablets, the unqualified dispenser probably tried to weigh out this potent drug, it being impossible to weigh such small quantity unless mixed with some inert ingredient like milk sugar. In the doses for the children, therefore, the amount of atropine sulphate was doubtless many times larger than required, and so death resulted.

"This incident happened in peace times. It is rather disagreeable to think of the mistakes that may have happened from the same cause during war time, when haste in dispensing medicine was necessary.

"There is at present a bill before Congress to establish a pharmacy corps and which would require all medicines to be dispensed by a graduate pharmacist. The surgeon general of the United States is reported to oppose this innovation for the simple reason that he does not want his authority divided. If this be the case, it is a poor peg upon which to hang his opposition. Surely the lives of soldiers and of their dependents is entitled to be safeguarded against ignorance and inexperience. The army certainly needs the services of pharmacists who know their business as well as citizens in more peaceful occupation."

(From *Journal-World*, Lawrence, Kansas.)

#### "A NEEDED ARMY CHANGE."

"The outcome of the investigation into the deaths of two children of soldiers at Fort Leavenworth may be the improvement of the army medical service. The children's deaths were traceable directly to the lack of graduate pharmacists in the army medical organization. A member of the medical department made an error in compounding prescriptions which a graduate pharmacist would not have made, with fatal results in two families. A court martial has established that as the salient fact in the case, but has not yet determined what punishment shall be imposed upon the man for his ignorant mistake.

"Jonathan Rigdon, a Lawrence boy and graduate of the University of Kansas school of medicine, who wrote the prescription, was cleared of culpability in connection with the case. The prescription was properly written but wrongly filled.

"A bill before the last session of Congress was aimed to correct the defect in the medical organization shown in the Leavenworth case. Dean Havenhill of the University school of

pharmacy has been endeavoring for a long time to have the services of graduate pharmacists used in the army. The innovation hitherto has been opposed, but the Leavenworth case may be an effective factor in bringing about the needed change."

The following articles appeared in the *El Dorado Times*:

"TAKE TESTIMONY IN TRIAL OF POST MEDICAL OFFICER."

"Corp. Ralph E. Hawkins Being Tried by Court Martial in Death of Children Last April."

"The court martial proceedings against Corporal Ralph E. Hawkins, medical corps, got under way this morning at 8 o'clock at military police headquarters and continued until 12.15 o'clock this afternoon when it adjourned for the day. Corporal Hawkins is being tried in connection with the sudden deaths of William Cornett and Frank Canki, which occurred April 26th, following a brief illness.

"Among the witnesses called to testify at this morning's session were, Sgt. and Mrs. Rudolph Canki, parents of Frank Canki; Mrs. Gladys Cornett, mother of William Cornett; Lieut. Jonathan M. Rigdon; Major George D. Chunn and Major George A. O'Connell.

"Sgt. and Mrs. Canki testified regarding the brief illness of their son and told of him dying while on the way to the station hospital, shortly after he had been given medicine from a prescription written by Lieutenant Rigdon and filled by Corporal Hawkins.

"The prescription was introduced in the testimony and Major Chunn and Major O'Connell both of the medical corps, said in their opinion the prescription would not have caused the deaths if it had been filled out as written and given according to the directions.

"Capt. Frederick H. Black, field artillery, is acting trial judge advocate and is prosecuting the case. The charge comes under the 93rd article of war and corresponds to a manslaughter charge in civil courts.

"Lt. Col. G. B. Strong has been engaged as special counsel for the defense. The trial will be resumed tomorrow morning at 7.30 o'clock and it is expected all the testimony will be in before adjournment.

"A special court stenographer is taking down all the testimony which after the trial will be written up and given to the court-martial board for aid in reaching their verdict. It is said probably several days will elapse before the decision of the board is known."

"SOME DAMAGING TESTIMONY IN HAWKINS TRIAL."

"Medical Officer Testifies Corporal Who Compounded Medicine Didn't Use the Correct Weights.

"Court-martial proceedings against Corporal Ralph E. Hawkins, medical corps, Fort Leavenworth, charged with manslaughter in connection with the deaths of William Cornett and Frank Canki, began yesterday were resumed this morning in military police headquarters at 7.30 o'clock and continued until 12.30 o'clock this afternoon when it adjourned for the day.

"Yesterday Capt. Frederick H. Black, trial judge advocate introduced evidence which tended to show the prescription written by Lieut. Jonathan H. Rigdon, medical corps, would not have proved fatal had it been filled as written.

"Additional witnesses introduced to-day were put on by the prosecuting side and were: Maj. Guy L. Qualls, medical corps; Maj. Daniel H. Torrey, adjutant; Maj. Martin R. Reiber, medical corps, and Col. Percy L. Jones, medical corps; Tech. Sgt. Frank E. Baier, medical corps.

"Maj. Qualls testified that it was his opinion the prescription was properly written and that the medication prescribed would not have caused the deaths had the prescription been filled properly.

"Major Torrey introduced documentary evidence assembled on the case. Major Reiber, who performed the autopsy on the two children, said death resulted because of congested lungs in both instances and could not have been caused by meningitis.

"Colonel Jones said the prescription had it been filled as written should not have caused the deaths. Colonel Jones also brought out that inasmuch as Corporal Hawkins had asked for promotion and was being considered for such, he was thought qualified to act as a pharmacy clerk. He also said the accused when questioned immediately following the deaths, said he had used the atrophine sulphate in filling the prescription in powdered form instead of in capsule form, and that due to the difficulty of getting measurements accurately in powdered form, it was possible

one of the compounds used in making up the medicine had been used in excessive quantities.

"Corporal Hawkins had been on duty as a relief pharmacist for three years, according to Colonel Jones, and was qualified for the place.

"Sergeant Baier testified Corporal Hawkins admitted to him under questioning that he thought the medicine was poison at the time he was putting it up but had not believed the reaction would be so drastic.

"Sergeant Baier also said the accused had admitted he used the powdered form, weighing it on chemists scales, instead of using the capsule form.

"No testimony for the defense has as yet been introduced by Col. C. B. Strong, counsel for Corporal Hawkins. The trial will be resumed tomorrow morning at 7.30 o'clock and it is not expected it will be over for two or three days yet.

"Authorities at the fort expect the court-martial proceedings against Lieutenant Rigdon to start next Monday morning, July 28. Lieutenant Rigdon is understood to be under a charge of neglect of duty in connection with the case."

The following are Associated Press reports:

"MEDICAL OFFICER TO TRIAL AT LEAVENWORTH."

"Leavenworth, Kans. July 25th (A.P.).—A military court convened at Fort Leavenworth to-day to hear the case of Lieutenant Jonathan M. Rigdon, charged with neglect in the death of two boys, children of enlisted men at the post.

"The two boys, William Cornett and Frank Canki, died April 26 after taking medicine prescribed by Lieut. Rigdon, who was a member of the medical corps. The charge is based on the officer's alleged failure to respond to a call when the children were seized with convulsions after the medicine had been administered.

"The trial of Corp. Ralph E. Hawkins, charged with negligence in compounding the prescription given him by Lieutenant Rigdon, was continued late yesterday because of the absence of Private Virgil Phipps, guard and service company, who acted as court reporter. Phipps' notes were available to the board but could not be transcribed accurately by other short hand reporters.

"Private Phipps last was seen here Wednesday night and since then has not reported for duty. According to authorities at the fort, a soldier absent without leave from duty is not dropped from the rolls as a deserter until he is gone ten days.

"A court reporter from Kansas City was taking testimony in the trial of Lieutenant Rigdon.

"The court martial convened at 8 o'clock this morning and continued in session this afternoon. Four witnesses were put on the stand by Capt. Frederic H. Black, trial judge advocate, at the morning session.

"Mrs. William Cornett, mother of William Cornett, testified regarding a telephone conversation with Lieutenant Rigdon after she noticed her son's condition was becoming worse.

"She testified Lieutenant Rigdon advised her to increase dosage of medicine from five drops to eight drops and that the only time he had come to see the child was when he wrote the prescription.

"The medicine prescribed was atropine sulphate, and was put up by Corporal Hawkins in powdered form instead of in capsule form as the prescription called for, according to testimony introduced during the first days of his trial.

"Mrs. Cornett testified she had not told the medical officer in a telephone conversation that the child was suffering convulsions.

"Sergeant Cornett, next on the stand, said he was in the room with his wife while she talked to Rigdon. Cornett testified his wife told Lieutenant Rigdon the child was in convulsions. He also stated Rigdon did not come to their house after the call.

"Col. Percy Jones, medical corps, testified officers in charge of patients outside of the station hospital were Col. W. E. Cooper and Lieutenant Rigdon, and that it was customary for each officer to continue with a case until its conclusion.

"Lt. Col. G. B. Strong and Capt. Parry Taylor are acting as defense counsel in this trial also. Lieutenant Rigdon was not put on the stand this morning. The trial is expected to continue through tomorrow morning at least."

"RIGDON ACQUITTED."

"Medical Officer Is Freed of Neglect Charges in Death of Two Youths. Is Son of Lawrence Man."

"Leavenworth, Kan., July 26th. (A.P.)—A military court sitting at Fort Leavenworth, late yesterday acquitted Lieut. Jonathan M. Rigdon, medical corps, of neglect charges in the death April 26th of William Cornett and Frank Canki, sons of enlisted men at the post.

"The medical officer was charged with failure to respond to calls from the boys' parents after they became violently ill from medicine administered to them for the measles. The prescription for the medicine was written by Lieutenant Rigdon and presented to Corp. Ralph Hawkins who is accused of negligence in filling it. His trial is expected to be completed next week.

"The court found that the officer had written the prescription correctly. Mrs. William Cornett, mother of one of the boys, testified she had not mentioned in her telephone conversation with the physician that her son had convulsions.

"Lieut. Rigdon, a graduate of the University of Kansas medical school, received his commission only ten days before the boys died. Before entering the army he practiced medicine at Effingham, Kans.

"Lieutenant Rigdon is the son of Walter Rigdon of Lawrence, a candidate for the Republican nomination for congress in this district."

"SOLDIER DRUG CLERK FREED IN DEATHS OF TWO CHILDREN."

"Was Tried by Fort Leavenworth Court-Martial for Improperly Compounding Prescription."

"Leavenworth, Kans., Aug. 8 (A.P.)—Corporal Ralph E. Hawkins, prescription clerk at the base hospital, Fort Leavenworth, to-day was acquitted by a court-martial which tried him on a charge of contributing to the deaths of two children of enlisted men by improperly compounding a prescription.

"Hawkins was assigned to filling prescriptions, although not a registered pharmacist. Upon his acquittal he was restored to duty at the hospital."

The *Kansas Pharmaceutical News*, edited by Secretary Roy C. Reese of the Kansas Association, comments editorially:

"LACK OF PHARMACY IN THE ARMY CAUSES DEATHS."

"A very sad case has come to our notice the past week, at Fort Leavenworth.

"In April, two officers' children were afflicted with measles, Lieut. Rigdon, who graduated from the K. U. School of Medicine, and who has practiced medicine in Effingham, was called, and prescribed a dose of Atropine Sulphate 1-200 grain, to be given in Hypodermic tablet form. The hospital corps does not include a registered or graduate pharmacist, the prescriptions were given to a corporal in the corps to fill. The corporal is not a druggist or pharmacist in any sense of the word. He did not know that H. T. meant Hypo-tabs. The metric system being used, the prescription read, H. T. Atropine Sul. 0.0003.

"Again, the corporal was lost. He used scales and weighed out some powdered Atropine Sul. The medicine was given to the small boys, aged 2 and 4 years. In about 1½ hours both were dead, death caused by suffocation or paralysis of the lungs.

"During the court-martial of the corporal the testimony of an army doctor brought out more clearly the indifferent attitude taken by some members of the medical staff, and the careless system by which incompetent men and men absolutely ignorant of the action and power of drugs are allowed to fill prescriptions, and dispense drugs promiscuously. One doctor, in testifying, stated that he had examined the corporal on trial, at three different times, for promotion. That the corporal had passed a satisfactory examination, as to his fitness for promotion in military knowledge, physical condition, and various other subjects including pharmacy and *materia medica*.

"Then, after first stating that the corporal on trial had passed the examinations satisfactorily, he was asked if, in his opinion, the corporal was competent to act as a pharmacist. He answered, 'I don't know.' Somewhat of a paradox. This brings out clearly the need of an established and competent pharmacy corps in the army, composed of registered or graduate pharmacists, who have passed an examination in pharmacy, and its various branches, before an examining

board of known ability, and responsibility, such as our state examining boards, and our pharmacy school faculties.

"This case must be taken up by all state association officials, national association officials, and by the pharmacy schools throughout the country, it must be brought forcibly to the attention of our congressmen, senators, and the higher officials in the army.

"This case puts it entirely up to the commanding officers of the army medical corps. A soldier or a soldier's family has just as much right to protection against poisons, and potent drugs, as any citizen in the country."

It is reported that the prescription called for:

R̄

H T

Atropine sulphate .0003

Sig.: Dissolve in 4 cc. water and give 5 drops.

## INTERNATIONAL PHARMACEUTICAL FEDERATION, JULY 16TH-19TH.

We are indebted to Secretary-General Hofman for a report of the recent general meeting of the International Pharmaceutical Federation. The meeting in Stockholm gave the delegates who were present a delightful opportunity for visiting the apothecary shops of Sweden. These are very interesting places and those who had the opportunity of being present will long remember their visit.

There were delegates present from eighteen different countries. The opening meeting was held in the home of the apothecary society, and opened by President L. van Itallie, who reminded the Federation that Carl Wilhelm Scheele was a Swedish pharmacist, and among others well known for their work in pharmacy, chemistry and botany he mentioned Berzelius, Arrhenius and Linnaeus. He also referred to the late Edmund White and to Van Ledden Hulsebosh as founders of the Federation.

Dr. Hofman presented his secretarial and financial report. Changes in the status, changing the representation of delegates and designating three delegates for 5000 members of the Association represented.

President van Itallie asked to be relieved of the office of President. His declination was accepted and he was elected Honorary President on motion of Mr. Barthet, which was carried unanimously. Dr. J. J. Hofman, the General-Secretary, was nominated for President, and it was decided to leave the election of the new General-Secretary to the Board.

The members of the Board are Saville Peck, Cambridge; Herman Thoms, Berlin; Mr. Barthet, Paris; Dr. Høst Madsen, Copenhagen; O. von Koritsansky, Budapest; and Dr. Schamelhout, Brussels.

The Pharmaceutical Society of Japan, with 2000 members was elected to membership in the Federation, and as associate members there were accepted thirty-four pharmacists of Sweden, eighteen of Norway, two of Denmark, four of Finland and two of Holland.

The first subject under discussion was the report of the Committee on Medicine in Ships, by Messrs. Linstead, van Itallie and Vavasseur.

The Committee decided to accept the following:

1. That the supply of medicines and surgical appliances in ships should be supervised by pharmacists preferably those who would visit the ships personally.
2. That every ship should carry a list of the medicines and appliances which it is required to have on board according to the regulations of the respective countries. (Variations permitted should be indicated on the list.)
3. That no ship except those making short voyages, should be permitted to leave port until the Captain is in possession of a certificate signed by a doctor or pharmacist; that the stocks of medicines and appliances prescribed on the list are complete.
4. That the Federation might usefully publish an international Formulary for medicines used on ships. The report contained the replies of eleven countries relating to the control and

inspection of ships. Dr. Schamelhout prefers that the certificates of control shall be delivered by all pharmacists on condition that it will not be the pharmacist who has supplied the medicines. Mr. Mandowsky proposed to make a Central Institute for Information that will obtain all necessary information relative to the subject. He prefers closets for stoppered bottles rather than old chests which are still being used. He also suggested a collection of records of prescriptions of different countries.

The next report was that of the Committee on International Nomenclature of Products, the names of which are trade-marks.

The proposal by Dr. Zwikker that it will be useful to have in the Pharmacopœia short names for chemical products which are on the market under protected names, was accepted. It was also suggested that it would be useful to accept the same names which are already in use in the United States, British and other pharmacopœias and it would be preferable if the right to a name would not constitute a lasting monopoly for a product.

The next report was that of the Committee of Inquiry on the Influence of Industries on Pharmacy, and was made by Dr. Hofman and Dr. Schamelhout. Their conclusions were:

1. That the law must have as principle that medicine should only be prepared and dispensed by pharmacists and that pharmacists must be responsible for the medicines they dispense.

2. The government must make regulations relative to the education and examination of pharmacists and relative to the installment of pharmacies.

3. Associations should be duly and practically conducted.

4. The government must await the supervision of manufacturing and sale of patented pharmaceutical preparations and must require of the manufacturer to put the prescription on the labels of bottles.

5. Dispensing of medicines on ships and in public and private sanitoriums and other institutions placed under the control of qualified pharmacists.

6. Pharmaceutical organizations are asked to undertake control of patent medicines and study the question as to whether the pharmacist or the manufacturers of the patents should be responsible for these products. This subject was discussed by Dr. Thoms and other delegates. The joint opinion was that the manufacturers are responsible to the pharmacists and the manufacturers are responsible to the public.

Question number 6 of the Agenda, that the pharmaceutical organizations supervise pharmaceutical patents is discussed in the report of Dr. Rising on "The Control of Pharmaceutical Patents in Sweden" and in international coöperation. The Board of the Federation has given thought to this question and proposes to nominate an international Committee of seven members and to give the annual financial support to this Committee. The Committee can collect the methods for examination and make researches in different countries and publish these methods in the *Bulletin* of the Federation. The Board proposes as members of this Committee Prof. Thoms of Berlin, Dr. Rising of Stockholm and Baggesgaard and Rasmussen, Copenhagen, Dr. Schamelhout of Brussels, Prof. Herissey of Paris, Dr. Weiss of Vienna, Prof. van Itallie, Leyden. For the next year 1000 guilders (about \$400) were voted to this Committee.

The Pharmaceutical Society of Greece asked for information relative to the conditions for the supplying of medicines under Social Insurance in different countries. This proposal is published in the *Bulletin* of the Federation. Mr. Lang, of Switzerland, called attention to an international sign for pharmacies.

The meeting of the International Federation will be held at Prague in 1932. Dr. Heger also invited the Federation to come to Vienna but this was not accepted because of a previous invitation of the delegate of Czechoslovakia to the Federation at the meetings of Lausanne and Paris.

The officers of the Federation are: *President*, J. J. Hofman, Holland; *Vice-Presidents*, M. Barthet, France; H. Thoms, Germany; E. Saville Peck, Great Britain; O. von Koritsanzky, Hungary; E. Höst Madsen, Denmark. The secretaries are to be elected.

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The Fifth International Botanical Congress met in Cambridge (England), August 16th to 23rd. Prof. A. C. Seward, of the University of Cambridge, presided over the meeting.