

EDITORIAL NOTES

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PROPRIETARY ARTICLES TRADE ASSOCIATION DECISION.

The Imperial Privy Council, at London, Eng., has dismissed the appeal of the Proprietary Articles Trade Association (of Canada) against the decision of the Supreme Court of Canada, which upheld the validity of the Combines Investigation Act. The case has been pending since 1926, when an investigation was held under the provisions of the act into the operations of the P. A. T. A., the membership of which included all branches of the drug trade, which resulted in its being declared an illegal organization in the restraint of trade. The Provinces of Ontario and Quebec joined with the P. A. T. A. in the appeal of this finding on the ground that the Dominion Parliament had no power under the constitution to enact such a law.

"BELIEF IN ONE ANOTHER."

A letter from a pharmacist of Wisconsin has been received, which reads:

"When my son was not at school he was active in our drug store. I have always made it a point to teach him as much about the business as possible and I have impressed our ethics upon his mind. I have kept a close contact with him throughout his course through the medical school and learned that there were many occasions when he actually defended pharmacy even with the faculty. He has converted his fraternity brothers and the result is that a good many will graduate next June with at least good will toward pharmacists. I will say also that it is too bad that the medics do not receive more training in pharmacy."

MERCURIC CHLORIDE POISONING WITH RECOVERY FOLLOWING THE USE OF SODIUM THIOSULPHATE.*

BY HOWARD E. MARCHBANKS, M.D., C. HERBERT SMITH, M.D., AND HARRY L. CHURCH, M.D.,
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As one goes through the literature on mercuric chloride poisoning, one is struck with the comparatively few patients who have survived massive doses of the drug. For this reason we report this case because in some respects, which will be brought out, we believe it to be unique.

The literature is so vast that to attempt to review it would be beyond the scope of our intentions. However, in preparing this report, we have scanned the literature on the subject and find few, if any, cases reported in which the patient has taken as large an amount of the poison and retained it as long as our patient did and recovered.

Hayman and Priestly reported a case in which the blood urea nitrogen reached 247 mg. on the nineteenth day of treatment and on infusion of physiologic solution of sodium chloride the urea nitrogen was reduced to 83 mg. and eventually came to normal, leaving no damage to the kidney. Both kidneys had been decapsulated in this patient with apparently little result.

In 1920, Ravant described the influence of small injections of sodium thiosulphate on the course of a severe arsenical dermatitis. This report was followed in 1922 by that of McBride and Dennie, in which a regular and sustained course of sodium thiosulphate was advocated

* *Jour. A. M. A.*, 96 (1931), 611.

for the emergency and follow-up treatment of arsenical, mercurial and lead poisoning.

In 1928, Goldblatt reported the results of his experiments on the emesis interval in mercurial poisoning. He stated that in cases in which the patient had not vomited within thirteen minutes the prognosis was bad. In six fatal cases reported, the shortest interval was 15 minutes and the longest was 120 minutes. None lived with an interval over 15 minutes.

Hunter, in 1927, reported a fatal case of poisoning with mercuric chloride in which, at autopsy on the fourteenth day, he found there was practically complete regeneration of the tubular epithelium.

However, Harmon, in 1928, describes the pathologic changes of the kidney in four fatal cases of mercuric chloride poisoning in which intravenous injection of dosage over 5 mg. per Kg. of body weight had been given. He found degeneration and necrosis in the tubular epithelium of all four cases. The most severe lesions were seen in the proximal and distal convoluted tubules. The glomeruli apparently escaped.

Weiss, in 1924, reported a series of 135 consecutive patients poisoned by some form of mercury with only 8 deaths. These patients took from $1\frac{1}{2}$ to 50 grains (from 0.1 to 3.1 Gm.) of mercuric chloride. In only fifteen patients did a complete suppression develop. Of these, seven died. The patients who had the greatest difficulty were of the group that took more than 30 grains (2 Gm.) and those in whom the institution of treatment was delayed. The treatment used by Weiss was the intravenous injection of large doses of Fischer's solution; namely, crystallized sodium carbonate, 10 Gm.; sodium chloride, 15 Gm.; distilled water, sufficient to make 1000 cc., along with other alkali mixtures by mouth.

Rosenbloom, in 1919, described a method of treatment that depended chiefly on the use of alkalization for its benefits. Great credit is due these early workers for the progress they made.

Kahn, in 1915, reported a case in which a Greek had committed suicide by taking from 25 to 50 Gm. of mercuric chloride. An autopsy was done, the observations of which he reports. He likewise gives the amount of mercury that was recovered from the vomitus, the stool washings and the urine. He also gives the amount of mercury found in every organ of the body, including even the

skin and the hair. He found that the liver contained the greatest amount, 303 mg. of mercury, the intestines next, 81.48 mg., and the brain third, with 59.9 mg. After these were the kidneys, lungs, spleen and pancreas. The other organs contained only small amounts.

This covers only a small amount of the literature on the subject but brings up a few of the more important things about poisoning with mercuric chloride.

PERSONAL AND NEWS ITEMS.

Prof. J. G. Beard, a member of the University of North Carolina faculty, School of Pharmacy, since his graduation in 1909, has been appointed dean of the University School of Pharmacy, succeeding the late Dean Edward Vernon Howell.

Dr. Charles Parsons has been appointed business manager of the American Chemical Society, of which he has been secretary since 1907.

Dr. S. A. Mitchell, director of the Leander McCormick Observatory, University of Virginia, will give the second Stuart McGuire Lecture at the Medical College of Virginia, Richmond, on March 25th. His subject will be "Eclipse Hunting in the South Seas." The Stuart McGuire Lecture was established a year ago in recognition of the services of Dr. Stuart McGuire to the college, to medical education and to surgery.

Dr. John C. Krantz, Jr., delivered the address on Founders' Day of the Philadelphia College of Pharmacy and Science. He was also honored with the degree of Master in Pharmacy by the latter. Research was the subject of Dr. Krantz's address, entitled "Heralds of Progress."

Nearly 300 guests attended a testimonial dinner given to **Dr. Henry V. Arny**, new dean of the College of Pharmacy of the City of New York, Columbia University, by the alumni association of the college and other local pharmaceutical associations, February 25th, in the Hotel New Yorker.

Frederick D. Lascoff was toastmaster. The speakers included William C. Anderson, dean of the Brooklyn College of Pharmacy; Marston T. Bogert, Columbia University representative on the college board of trustees; Nicholas S. Gesoalde, president of the New York State Pharmaceutical Association; Charles H. LaWall, dean of the Philadelphia College of Pharmacy and Science; Robert S. Lehman, secretary of the New York Veteran Druggists' Association; Edward Plaut, second vice-