

unique program of extramural research has the potential of making significant contributions to the betterment of the public health.

This is not the first public utterance of an irresponsible nature by Dr. Schamberg on this subject; he voiced the same kind of innuendo at the recent White House Conference on Health. Thus, I request that this letter be published to help set the record straight.

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DRUG REACTION SIMULATING TETANUS

To the Editor: As an addendum to Dr. Edsall's letter entitled "Suspected Tetanus in a Previously Immunized Person" in the November 4, 1965, issue of the *Journal*, I should like to re-emphasize an increasingly common cause of trismus and "stiff neck" — namely, the syndrome resulting from an adverse reaction to oral or parenteral administration of a phenothiazine compound.

I have had the opportunity of seeing a number of patients who displayed marked trismus and a meningismus-like condition after doses of as little as 10 mg. of prochlorperazine (Compazine). Symptoms may appear within an hour, and the classic signs of basal-ganglion involvement may be absent. The patient need not be habituated to the drug.

Hospitalization is not required because within seconds after an intravenous injection of 50 mg. of diphenhydramine (Benadryl), the symptoms disappear and will not return unless more phenothiazine is given.

The key to the diagnosis lies in careful questioning of the patient and accurate identification of any medications that he may have taken.

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WARNING TO DRUG USERS

To the Editor: The communication of Drs. Froesch, Robbins and Stern, published in the December 2, 1965, issue of the *Journal*, dealing with untoward reactions to LSD is timely and important. As an addendum I should like to note that acute drug psychoses can occur not only with LSD but with the other hallucinogens and stimulants that are commonly taken and commonly regarded as benign by youthful users. In the last year I have seen 2 cases of acute panic and thinking disorganization that followed the use of marijuana. In 1 of these the reaction followed a single exposure; in the second it followed 2 or 3 exposures. In each case the reaction lasted for several weeks. Each patient was known to me before taking marijuana, and there was no prior evidence of psychosis. Both were in the category of passive-aggressive personality disorders. In addition, I saw a seventeen-year-old girl in whom an acute delusional state followed ingestion of illicitly obtained amphetamine capsules. She recovered spontaneously over a period of two weeks.

None of my patients required hospitalization, perhaps because they were living at home, where parents were able to provide close attention and support. It is possible that without a supporting home environment, their panic would have reached more serious proportions.

I have the impression that the malignant aspects of drug usage are not sufficiently appreciated for several reasons: young adolescents reside with parents who may be in a position to neutralize the most severe effects; the psychiatrist in private practice who sees a psychotic adolescent not previously known to him may be unable to date the onset of the disorder and may fail to associate it with an isolated drug experience; and it is not always possible to get reliable history of drug usage from a minor who may fear punishment or reprisal.

The individual and public-health aspects of self-administered hallucinogenic, narcotic and other addictive drugs are

very grave. I am impelled to urge greater awareness on the part of practitioners, wider exchange of individual clinical experiences and more attention to the problem in undergraduate medical education.

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BLUE SHIELD TAKES ACTION

To the Editor: At a meeting held on December 15, 1965, the Central Professional Service Committee of the Blue Shield Board of Directors voted to terminate the Participating Physician's Agreement between Blue Shield and one of its participating physicians, effective January 1, 1966.

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BOOK REVIEWS

A History of Medicine. By Brian Inglis. 8°, cloth, 15 + 196 pp., with many illustrations, some in color. Cleveland and New York: The World Publishing Company, 1965. \$10.00.

This book is of unusual interest to medical historians and students for a number of reasons. First of all, it is written by a layman, a journalist born in Dublin, with a Ph.D. from Dublin University. He has written other books on Irish affairs and a critical one on medicine, published in 1964, containing a discussion on naturopathy, homeopathy, chiropractic, yoga, hypnotherapy, Christian Science and similar practices having an impact on medicine. Called by a colloquial term, "fringe medicine," the book was an excellent summary of a difficult subject. This philosophically minded author thus had already turned to medicine in his background studies.

Secondly, the text is well written and almost free from minor errors, and with broad, sweeping strokes covers the whole history of medicine in less than 200 pages. Many details are naturally omitted, but the frame encloses the principal trends of the essential story from early civilizations to modern times. The author's style is clear, a little modern as fitting a journalist, but remarkably readable and based on wide, if not always discriminating reading. For once, a book on the history of medicine is not easily put down, and one is tempted to read far into the night. The words do not flow quite as smoothly as those in Osler's *Evolution of Modern Medicine* (1921), the best of the popular books, but Osler had an acquired medical background grafted onto his inherent and superbly developed literary talents.

Finally, the book contains a remarkable series of illustrations, many little known and frequently drawn from unusual sources. They are grouped in broad categories, but unfortunately not well integrated with the text. The author seems not to have had them in mind when the text was written. Many come from the vast collections at the British Museum, but others stem from the Royal College of Surgeons or the Wellcome Historical Medical Museum in London. Readers will take a delight in these illustrations, and the book may be used with profit as a picture book, the text being ignored. But it would have been much more satisfactory if an analysis of the pictures had augmented and illuminated the history, as was done so effectively by Osler.

References are few, and the bibliography scanty, tending to put undue emphasis on modern books. Some of the illustrations in color are not first class, but since those taken from Brunschwig's book on distillation (1512) were all colored by hand in the originals, one must expect variations. Possibly the one chosen for the dust cover was not the most effective in coloring.