

The Medical Roundup

by *Walter Alvarez*

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Low Blood Sugar

On my desk is a letter such as many I see, from a man who says that for five years he's been on a "hypoglycemia diet" — supposedly designed to cure a "functional hyperinsulinism." He read in one of my newspaper columns that at a great clinic a few thousand patients with this supposed disease were examined and in none could the diagnosis be confirmed.

To those of us physicians who have been hunting for years to find a real case of "functional" hypoglycemia, the fashionable diagnosis of this disease has always seemed to be a silly fad. The man who just wrote me has sent me his blood sugar curve, which is normal. His fasting blood sugar was 118 mg., which is at the top of normal. How any one with a thimbleful of brains could diagnose a low blood sugar on the basis of these findings is beyond me.

The fact that the man says he has been able to live only by sticking to the irrational diet that is prescribed for this supposed disease, doesn't prove anything. Many people are cured by being convinced that at last their puzzling disease has been given the right name.

Pregnancy in Young Girls

I was much interested in an article by Dr. Thomas J. Muslo, of the St. Louis University School of Medicine, in which he states that between 1951 and 1960, of the 87,000 obstetric patients cared for in four local hospitals, there were 50 girls under 14 years of age. Forty-six girls were 13 years old, and four were 12 years old. Most of these young girls had an ordinary pregnancy and labor without unusual difficulty.

Some of the girls were distressed by the social, economic and psychological difficulties which soon stared them in the face. They needed

particularly good and kindly care from their obstetrician.

A Swollen Arm
Recently in this column I told of a study made by prominent surgeons in Cleveland who concluded that the swelling of an arm, which occurs occasionally after the "radical removal" of the breast for cancer, could not be due always to x-ray treatment, because in many of their cases, the woman with a swollen arm had not had any x-ray treatment.

The Cleveland surgeons felt satisfied that the trouble was due usually to infection, and hence they treated it largely with penicillin. They claimed good results.

Now, Dr. John Sonneland of Spokane says that he thinks that the main cause is x-ray treatment. He argues logically that when a woman has a breast removed for cancer, she does not need x-ray treatment. I was convinced of this when Dr. Stuart Harrington studied the records of 5,028 women with cancer of the breast, operated on at the Mayo Clinic. What he found was that the woman who had had no x-ray treatment lived as long as those who had had it. Dr. Sonneland says that this was true also of 1,461 women studied in Manchester, England. In both of these studies, the investigator concluded that x-ray treatment did not add anything to the life-spans of the women who had had their breast removed for cancer.

Treatment Expected

Why then do most women still get x-ray treatment after a breast operation? Some surgeons tell me that they order such treatment because people expect it, or they want everything done that can possibly be done to insure a cure. If anything should go wrong with a woman who did not have x-ray treatments, her family might feel that such treatment, if given, could have saved her life.

In the cases of women with a big swollen arm, Dr. Sonneland uses a special custom-made elastic arm stocking to control the swelling. Also, he uses surgery to remove some of the excess tissue. Also, the

Dennis the Menace



"MR. WILSON SURE LIKES ME. HE SAID I WISH YOU WERE MY LITTLE BOY FOR JUST FIVE MINUTES!"

Crater Lake Discovered by Prospector 110 Years Ago

John Wesley Hillman, member of a prospecting party searching for the "Lost Cabin" gold mine, encountered Crater Lake on June 12, 1853, reports Superintendent W. Ward Yeager.

One hundred ten years ago today, young Hillman—only 21 years old—was riding a mule up the western slope of the volcano now known as Mt. Mazama, when his mule halted abruptly at the brink of the steep walls surrounding the lake.

Inspired by the intense color of the water, the party

christened their find Deep Blue lake—discarding an alternative proposal of Mysterious lake. It remained until 1869 for a group of local residents from Jacksonville, Ore., to bestow the present name of Crater Lake, following their visit in August of that year.

Hillman was born in Albany, N. Y., on March 29, 1832, and died in Hope Villa, La., on March 19, 1915. Today a bronze plaque at Discovery Point, in the approximate location of Hillman's arrival, commemorates his find. Hillman peak, highest point on the lake's rim honors the first pioneer to view this incomparable blue lake.

Tax Collections Increase in State

Salem — UPB — Tax collections through May 31 were up 9.9 per cent this fiscal year over the first 11 months of last fiscal year, the State Tax Commission said Tuesday.

Collections for the past 11 months totaled \$122,983,309, compared with \$111,948,122 for the previous fiscal year's first 11 months.

Personal income tax payments were up 12 per cent, while corporate taxes were down .7 per cent, the commission noted.

Your Money's Worth

By SYLVIA PORTER
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GOLD FLOWS ABROAD—FIVE SHORT BLOCKS*

(This is the second in a series of two articles.)

As a youngster in the early 1930s, I vividly recall spending hours sitting on a bench at the tip of Manhattan Island and watching the world's great ships pull out of New York harbor laden with gold drained by our foreign creditors from the U.S. gold reserve. I recall spending more hours standing near the Federal Reserve Bank of New York watching men form long lines as they waited to exchange dollars into gold for immediate shipment abroad. I recall the panic which finally forced us to devalue the gold value of our dollar by raising the price of gold behind the dollar from \$20.67 to \$35 an ounce.

I remember . . . And thus, the contrast between the great gold outflow of the early 1930s and the great outflow of the early 1960s is particularly dramatic to me.

Since the start of 1962, \$1.1 billion of gold has flowed out of the U.S. Our reserve is now below \$15.8 billion, lowest since 1939. With our foreign creditors still building up immense claims against our dollar which they can transfer into gold at any time, we're certain to lose considerably more of our hoard.

How is this gold flowing out of the U.S. now? It is flowing out via armored trucks which move the gold bars from one set of cages in the U.S. Assay Office in downtown Manhattan to another set of cages in the New York Federal Reserve Bank, also in downtown Manhattan.

The entire route is five short New York City blocks, less than 15 minutes' walking distance.

It's a little-known, fascinating tale, so here goes. About 70 foreign countries are keeping gold in numbered cages in the New York Federal Reserve's vault—85 feet below street level, 55 feet below sea level. Let's say France is among them (the Federal Reserve does not identify the countries having cages, but of course she is one) and France decides to transfer \$100 million of her dollar claims into gold in order to bolster her precious metal reserve.

A French official calls a New York Reserve official and notifies him that France plans to exchange \$100 million for gold at the U.S. standard price of \$35 a troy ounce.

The New York Reserve official calls a counterpart at the U.S. Assay Office and tells him of the \$100 million demand for gold.

On the agreed-upon day, armored trucks draw up at the Assay Office on Old Slip at the East river, load the gold bars, drive them five blocks to the Federal Reserve at 33 Liberty st.

Guards take the gold bars down to the subterranean vault I described yesterday, trundle them, 60 to 100 at a time, through the massive 90-ton steel vault door and into a room where the bars are weighed on a huge scale so sensitive it weighs to the nearest 1/100 of a trop ounce.

Then the custodians—who wear heavy aluminum shoe guards so their toes won't be crushed if one of the 27-pound bars is dropped—move the bars into a gray cage whose secret number belongs to France. The cage is locked and sealed.

The gold bars — each worth \$13,434.79 — have been moved only five blocks and remain in downtown Manhattan. But the United States has \$100 million less of gold in reserve while France has \$100 million more of gold in reserve. The gold has "flowed out."

It would work the other way too. If France sold \$100 million of gold to us, the armored trucks would simply retrace their route—pick up this amount of gold bars at the New York Federal Reserve, deliver the bars to the U.S. Assay Office. Or if France sold gold to Italy, the bars involved would just be shifted from France's numbered cage to Italy's numbered cage—which could be a matter of a few feet.

It may seem a game of musical chairs, but it is deadly serious. Nations rise and fall on the total of gold they own and the world's confidence in the stability of their currencies. The grimmest financial problem facing the U.S. today is the persistent deficit in our balance of payments and the relentless threat this poses to our gold reserve and dollar.

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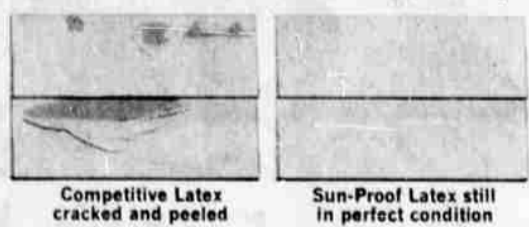
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The Family Council

Editor's note: The Family Council consists of a judge, a psychiatrist, three clergymen, three editors and a women's editor. Each article is a summary of a family disagreement presented to the council. The Council deals with problems, major and minor, encountered by guidance counselors and social workers. Edited by Mrs. Alma Denny. (Copyright by General Features Corp.)

Florence C.—I'm trying to talk her into nursing the new baby.

Ceil T.—I'd rather not be so old-fashioned, so domesticated.

Florence C.—I've just had my third child and this is the first time I've succeeded with nursing. The satisfactions are absolutely indescribable. You feel 100 per cent a mother. Since Ceil expects her second in September, I've offered to help her get started. That part isn't easy. But she plans to stick to formulas again.

Ceil T.—I tried nursing the first baby and lost my milk a few days after I got home from the hospital. The infant lost weight and I had a hard time getting him fed right. I don't deny that mother's milk is probably best, and there's no bottle and formula job. But the difference isn't worth so much sacrifice and risk.

The Council: High-button shoes haven't come back, Ceil, and they're still old-fashioned. But breast-feeding isn't and never will be. It's unpopular, misunderstood, a nuisance perhaps—but it's as current and up-to-date as tomorrow's newborns. Nature pours every argument in its favor into the pregnant woman's ear, if she but listens: Nurse your baby. It's part of the childbearing cycle. It keeps your infant closer to you. Both you and he need this exchange. . . . Why then is bottle-feeding almost "the rule" in the U.S.A.? Why will Florence's selling-job

probably fail? The answers lie in the attitudes of doctors, the excellence of substitute methods, and the reluctance of young mothers like Ceil to be "tied down" to such complete femininity. We'll reinforce Florence's crusade by underlining for Ceil the fact that there are definite, provable physical and emotional benefits to at least six months' worth of breast-feeding. And the greatest aid to succeed comes from girls like Florence who can "point with pride" to their own experience. Some of these pool their know-how and offer it to would-be nurses via the Leche League Intl., Inc., 3332 Rose st., Franklin Park, Ill.

Western Union Asks Rate Boost

New York — UPB — A 10 per cent increase in telegraph rates has been requested by Western Union, the company has announced.

Western Union said it had asked the Federal Communications Commission to recommend repeal of the 10 per cent excise tax on telegrams. If the rate increase is approved and the tax is repealed, the public would pay no more for telegrams, the company said. The excise tax dates from World War II.

Western Union officials said the firm would use added revenue to complete a modernization program, including microwave communications systems valuable to national defense.

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