

September 17, 1930

Dr. Irvin L. Hamant,

Norfolk, Conn.

Dear Dr. Hamant:

A case of illness from the ingestion of Ethyl Gasoline has been brought to my attention by Mr. Robbins B. Stoeckel, Commissioner of Motor Vehicles in the State of Connecticut. Mr. Stoeckel has given me permission to ask concerning the medical details of this case, and I am very much interested in knowing as much as I can discover concerning it. I am enclosing herewith a self-addressed stamped envelope, and I should appreciate very much the courtesy of a reply. I and my associates in this laboratory have been investigating the dangers associated with the use and distribution of Ethyl Gasoline for a number of years, cooperating in this work with the United States Public Health Service.

Mr. Stoeckel reports that his young cousin, about twenty four years of age, swallowed some considerable quantity of gasoline while attempting to start a suction through his gas tank by means of a rubber hose. Mr. Stoeckel rather naturally concluded that since the gasoline contains poisonous materials, that the injury was the result of such poisons. I am very much interested in knowing whether in your opinion the boy's symptoms and signs would give any justification for this conclusion. It would appear to me unlikely that this was the case, but that makes me all the more interested in obtaining your opinion. Mr. Stoeckel naturally enough has failed to consider the fact that gasoline itself is an exceedingly irritating substance, and would be expected to produce erosion of the mucous membrane, and a considerable amount of damage to the throat, esophagus, and the stomach, whereas the small quantity of lead contained in a reasonable quantity of gasoline such as might be swallowed, would be, generally speaking, insignificant as a case of lead intoxication.

Allow me to thank you in advance for such details as you find it possible to furnish me.

Very truly yours,

RAK:EJ