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CORRESPONDENCE

A Successful Sale of Fireworks

To the Editor — For years the benefits department of this Blue Cross Plan had noticed that from about Dec. 10 to Jan. 10 a number of the accidents were injuries by fireworks. Through our benefits department were cleared many reports of a child [illegible] being severely burned about the hands or face, or having a ruptured eardrum from fireworks explosions. In January, 1948, I mailed to each physician in North Carolina a card [illegible] to return to me in an enclosed, stamped envelope information is requested. On receipt of these cards a report was made and copies sent to each physician, each member of the state legislature, which was then in session, each hospital superintendent, and to numerous other interested persons.

The actual report made by the physicians is the most convincing I have ever seen. Numerous legislators wanted to be the first to offer a law regulating the sale of fireworks, and in spite of the fact that fireworks manufacturers and retailers employed three lawyers to lobby for them, a law was passed in North Carolina prohibiting the manufacture, sale, possession, transportation, and firing of fireworks of any kind except by [illegible] at the state fair and/or at a circus or something of that kind.

During the 30 day period following the release of this report, every newspaper, daily and weekly, in North Carolina printed editorials in favor of such a law. Following the appearance of these editorials there simply was no resistance to the law except from the fireworks manufacturers, retailers, and their lobbyists. The law has been kept so well that in January, 1949, we made a [illegible] and found that there were no serious accidents [illegible].

[illegible] doctors and surgeons in North Carolina appeared personally before the hearings of the legislature and insisted that a law be passed. In the spring of 1951, during the session of the legislature, a legislator submitted a bill to abolish the fireworks law. A few days later this act three small boys were killed by the explosion of a large gas truck that was parked in their yard. It was discovered that these boys were igniting and exploding fireworks near the truck. This was given considerable publicity in the newspapers and no more mention was made of a change in the law. If the American Medical Association would obtain laws [illegible] the state similar to the one in North Carolina and many other states, this one act should result in much credit to the Association.

F. M. Hersdon
Executive Vice President
The Hospital Care Association, Inc.
Durham, N. C.

Talc Pneumoconiosis

To the Editor — The article "Talc Pneumoconiosis," by Des [illegible], Bell and Sous-Cobern, in THE JOURNAL, April 19, 1952, page 1464, deserves critical comment.

The authors are apparently unaware of the wide variation in materials used in industry under the name "talc." The mineral talc is a specific substance—hydrous magnesium silicate $H_2Mg_3(SiO_3)_4$—however many other materials such as serpentine, talso [illegible] magnesium silicate, but $H_2Mg_3Si_4O_{12}$), dolomite (calcium magnesium carbonate) and [illegible] tremolite (calcium magnesium silicate) are commonly associated with it in varying amounts. Also [illegible] hydrous antimonium silicate) and soapstone (a [illegible] massive form of fine talc) are used industrially many times for the same or similar purposes as talc, and are commonly referred to as "talc." Williams' Talc Dust in the Rubber [illegible] *Engineering* 73:49-51 (April) 1937) and Schulz [illegible] *Commercial Talc*, Animal and Mineralogical [illegible] *Eng. & Journal* 24:75-79 (April) 1942) have [illegible] variation in composition of "talcs" as used in industry [illegible] the indefiniteness of the physiological response.

[illegible] also apparently unaware of the wide variation [illegible] content existing in commercial materials referred to as talcs. I have found that in the case of a high grade talc [illegible] the lower grades of pyrophyllite [illegible] standpoint or advancing our knowledge of pneumoconiosis, that this paper like [illegible] fect fails to define the condition [illegible].

[illegible]
Department of
Hygiene and
[illegible]

American Journal of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene

To the Editor — I have read with [illegible] page 168, the editorial entitled [illegible] should like to congratulate you on [illegible] which is in keeping with editorial [illegible] years in your journal.

I should like to point out [illegible] Russell's article, the reference to the [illegible] Journal of Tropical Medicine and the [illegible] journal is incorrect. There is no [illegible] Tropical Medicine, as the society that [illegible] Malaria Society, was dissolved at the [illegible] vember, 1951. A new society was organized [illegible] of the National Malaria Society [illegible] Tropical Medicine which now sponsors [illegible] Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene [illegible] journal under the name of the [illegible] *Medicine and Hygiene* which starts [illegible] of the calendar year 1952.

Because of the importance of [illegible] abstracting articles, we are particularly anxious [illegible] to the new *American Journal of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene* be correctly shown.

Martin D. Rogers, [illegible]
President, American Society of Tropical Medicine
and Hygiene
P. O. Box 717
Columbia, S. C.

Hiatus Hernia

To the Editor — In the article "[illegible] the Aged" by Sidney A. Portis and [illegible] published in the March 29, 1952 issue of [illegible] is an error in the use of a report [illegible].

In the paragraph "Examination of Esophagus [illegible] There were 10 (7.5%) with hiatus hernia — [illegible] trasts with that of Buck,[2] who reported that [illegible] patients between 50 and 60 had hiatus hernia." The [illegible] of mine which was used is not given, as references [illegible] but my data appeared in these articles: [illegible] *cal Journal* 71:2 (Jan.) 1949 [illegible] (April) 1949), and *Archives of Surgery* [illegible].

In those articles it is stated that of the [illegible] hiatus hernia, 76.61% were between [illegible] is different than saying that 76.6% [illegible] and 80 had hiatus hernia. Actually [illegible] and the incidence of hiatus hernia [illegible] rather than contrasting, compares [illegible] of 7.5% in the series given by Portis [illegible].

[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]