

EDITORIALS AND EDITORIAL COMMENTS

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MEDICAL ETHICS

WHAT ARE WE TO UNDERSTAND BY THEM? A very serious problem now confronts a number of physicians. How are they to treat cancer? The methods now endorsed by Organized Medicine, surgery, X-ray and radium have proven inefficient even in the most skilled hands. Statistical studies show that cancer is on the increase. Local methods of attack having failed and both clinical and scientific observation having shown the constitutional nature of the disease a rational conclusion is that cancer should be treated medically. But Organized Medicine has no such method of treatment to offer. A serum or antitoxin treatment is not consistent with the interests of surgery, X-ray or radium.

Within the last ten years, both a chemical antitoxin and a serum treatment have been discovered. Both the "antitoxin" and the serum, in the opinion of some of the leading medical men after clinical observation, have a decided effect on the absorption of cancer tissue and the restoring of the patient to health. Neither of these has had serious investigation by Organized Medicine, yet the Journal of the American Medical Association says that "It cannot be too earnestly asserted that neither one is in any sense established as either scientific or reliable."

How could Organized Medicine pass judgment on a cure discovered by a man of splendid attainments, whose laboratory researches had won the favorable comment of the best internists in the United States and Europe, without having given him proper opportunity to demonstrate to a medical body what his treatment could do? And that is just what did happen. To demonstrate the effectiveness of any constitutional treatment for cancer would take months, yet the investigation accorded Dr. Wm. F. Koch by the Wayne County Medical

Society in 1919, lasted only four weeks. And the investigating committee, composed largely of surgeons and roentgenologists, made an unfavorable report. It is said that there were five members on the committee but that only three of them observed the seven hopeless cases brought to Herman Kiefer Hospital for this investigation. Two of these hopeless cases are now alive and well, over six years after the treatment was given by Dr. Koch. Assuming that the other five died, a saving of 29 percent is a remarkable result and should merit attention.

(Dr. Koch's evaluation of the Wayne County Medical Society's Tests is included on this web site.)

It is against the code of ethics of Organized Medicine to use a remedy of which the formula is secret Dr. Koch stood ready to dedicate his discovery to his county medical society had it found a favorable report at the time of this investigation in 1919. Twice since then, he has indicated his desire to dedicate the formula to medicine, but he will not reveal the formula until his treatment has had proper investigation and endorsement by a medical body. Self-protection is the first law of preservation in matters medical as well as elsewhere. Medical history is full of experiences of men who suffered ridicule by their less learned confreres.

Today nearly a hundred physicians are convinced from personal observation that cancer is being cured by Koch's synthetic antitoxin. This Journal has published the case reports of nearly 50 cured cases, many of them of the worst forms of cancer. Over a score of physicians are so convinced of the efficacy of this treatment that if they were placed in position which required the making of a choice between severing relations with Organized Medicine or renouncing the use of a treatment which has enabled them to save lives that otherwise would have been lost, they would choose to sever relations with Organized Medicine. A number have already done so. To them, the oath to save a life is stronger than the oath to support the constitution of any fraternal organization, when such support would mean the renouncing of the only means known to them to save the life of a cancer sufferer.

There are a number of ethical physicians in the best interpretation of the term using the Koch Synthetic Antitoxin who have refrained from announcing their position through fear of undue criticism. The experience of a Professor of Surgery of Tulane University is an example of what some men fear should they frankly tell their medical societies what they are doing. This prominent surgeon, after announcing to his medical society what he was doing and after securing the seeming cooperation of some of its prominent members, was brought before the judicial body of the said medical society and denied the right as a member of the society to use a remedy which, in his opinion, would save life in some instances when all other methods of treatment had failed.

This man was none other than Doctor Carroll W. Allen of New Orleans. The September issue of the Journal* of his medical society gave 35 columns to his clinical experience in investigating Dr. Koch's work and of his personal observation from the treatment of 11 cases.

Dr. Allen's communication was presented to his medical society on April 27, 1925. In this, he states that the previous October he had strongly advised a patient having an inoperable cancer of the rectum to have nothing to do with the Koch treatment as it had been investigated and pronounced worthless.

*(Journal New Medical Surgical Society, September 1925.)

The patient, however, thought differently. Weighing less than 100 pounds and so weak that he had to be taken to the train on a stretcher, he went to Detroit. Two months later he returned to New Orleans weighing more than 130 pounds and, at the time of the writing of the doctor's paper, he weighed 170 pounds and attended regularly to his business, although there was still manifest some local evidence of the trouble. This was less than six months after going to Detroit. Shortly after this, Doctor Allen had an opportunity to see another wonderful result. He became interested and looked up Dr. Koch's early contributions to medical literature. These were found to be of more than passing interest, contributions such as one would expect from a high-class laboratory man. He decided to go to Detroit and of his visit there says:

Arriving there on December 27th, I began a systematic study of his cases and saw many in all the various stages of reaction. Everything was absolutely open to my closest scrutiny and Dr. Koch was often not present during my examinations though at all times available to answer all questions, which he did with perfect frankness, both to me and the patients. Results were not always favorable, some were slow and uncertain and he expressed doubt regarding others. He states that 20 percent of his cases failed to react. All this was done in a spirit of perfect candor and openness that disarmed at once any feeling of the possibility of subterfuge or evasion that may have existed in my mind.

The most interesting and impressive thing was the cured cases: Of these, I saw a large number and questioned them most closely. There remained no doubt but that they had bad cancer as they all gave a perfect clinical history. Some were primarily inoperable, many had been operated with recurrence, and the majority had had the usual X-ray and radium. They all had been hopeless surgically and had come to Dr. Koch as a last report.

My duty was apparent, I should take some steps to bring this matter to the attention of the profession and I felt that the best means of accomplishing this as well as for further proof for myself was first to treat a few of my hopeless cases here and properly check this work

with the aid of the laboratory. This appeared to me to be the best plan of procedure and I accordingly arranged with Dr. Koch to furnish me with as much of the formula as was needed.

Of his effort to bring the treatment of Dr. Koch to the attention of his local medical society, he says:

After my return, I felt I should place the matter before my confreres and accordingly invited 25 of my friends to meet at my house and asked their indulgence in allowing me to use it. I later had some correspondence with Dr. Parban, who was very kind in advising me about this matter and with whom I discussed it very freely. I have seen so much of its use that I believe there is something in this that profoundly affects cancer tissue and have felt that if Dr. Koch alone has been able to accomplish this much with it what might not be accomplished if we could get hold of it and investigate it in some of our great laboratories.

After the presentation of the report and the deductions on the 11 cases, which he had treated with Koch's method, Dr. Allen ended his paper as follows:

I feel that your careful consideration of the above cases must convince you that they have not run a normal cancer course and if Dr. Koch has not discovered what he thinks he has, at least found something which profoundly affects cancer tissue and I feel that it should be accorded a most liberal investigation both clinically and in the laboratory, as it may at least be the beginning of tremendous possibilities.

I have been persistently at work on the two objectionable features in the case of this preparation; its cost and its secrecy. The cost has been substantially reduced and I feel the problem of its secrecy is open to a solution.

I beg that you carefully consider what I have said and withhold your judgment on this matter, at least for the present if it is the truth, we cannot stop it and I feel that it is worth the most thorough and careful investigation on the part of the profession. Let me work as I have proposed, join with me if you will and let the result be my judgment.

On May 18, 1925, Doctor Allen was called before the judiciary committee of his medical society. At this time, he requested that he be permitted simply to finish treating the 11 cases then under his charge. The Board of Directors, after considering the report of the judiciary committee, formally called the attention of Dr. Allen to page 9, Chapter 2, Section 6 of the Principles of Medical Ethics of the American Medical Association and requested that he give this matter immediate consideration. The report reads:

The Board of Directors unanimously calls your attention to the fact that had your recommendations been accepted the whole society would be guilty of an unethical

procedure and in all honesty, would have been compelled to sever its affiliations with Organized Medicine as represented by the Louisiana State Medical Society and the American Medical Association. If Dr. Allen desires to investigate this remedy further, he should in all fairness to our organization resign.

Dr. Allen's reaction to this ultimatum is found in his renunciation, prepared in legal form, which was received by the assembled judiciary committee on July 24, 1923. How pitiable to find that a man of Dr. Allen's ability should have to comply with a code of ethics which proved to be a bar to his right to use a method which, in his opinion and in the experience of others, does save lives of persons who have been pronounced beyond all hope of recovery by any other method. Doctor Allen's statement reads:

Gentlemen:

Fully recognizing the incompatibility of my duties as a member of Organized Medicine with any professional or business relations with secret or proprietary remedies as opposed to the principles of ethics, which govern a liberal and humanitarian profession. I hereby declare that I have severed all professional and business relations with Dr. W. F. Koch, of Detroit, Mich., as the inventor, manufacturer and promoter of a specific treatment for cancer. I hereby make it clearly and unequivocally understood that I shall have no further connection with the said Koch as one of his advocates and endorsers and that henceforth I shall cease to administer or distribute this treatment or recommend its administration to my patients or to those of other practitioners as long as its composition and manufacture remain a secret monopoly and only resume its use, if I deem proper after its composition and manufacture has been wholly, clearly and definitely revealed to the profession through recognized organs of the medical press.

I wish, however, to qualify in this otherwise absolute renunciation of the Koch Treatment with request that I be permitted to complete the observations on the patients to whom I have administered the treatment in a purely experimental way, and for which treatment there will be no fees, charges, or payments collected for services relative to the Koch Cure.

In making this declaration, I trust that the objection to my continuance as a member in good standing of Organized Medicine will be removed.

I will furnish your committee at an early date the list of cases now under treatment.

Yours very truly,
CARROLL W. ALLEN

Dr. Allen's wishes were overruled. Concerning the publication of his report of the cases, he says, in part, as follows:

Having renounced the further use of the treatment on ethical grounds. I feel that the publication of my paper will only have an unfavorable effect and may bring the Journal into discredit. It will certainly be gotten hold of by the lay press and as there is certainly enough to it to justify anyone trying it and there are a great many arguments that can be used which may be very hard to answer. There is also a great deal else that I feel will come out if it gets in the lay press which I feel is very much better left out.

It is the general testimony of all physicians who have spent a number of days at the Koch Cancer Clinic, Detroit, that Dr. Koch is really curing cancer of the worst forms. How then, in the light of past events is his treatment to be made available to the medical profession? Dr. C. Everett Field, a Fellow of the American Medical Association and Director of the Radium Institute of New York, who has had two years' experience in the use of the synthetic antitoxin, has just published a book in which he sets forth the facts concerning the investigation of the Wayne County Medical Society and the attitude of the American Medical Association. Dr. Field is of the opinion that the matter cannot now be righted through the Wayne County Medical Society, Dr. Koch having on three specific occasions promised not only to publish his formula but to dedicate it to the Wayne County Medical Society together with the rights of distribution if it would, in turn, honestly investigate the remedy and report honestly its findings. It has shown no disposition to conduct a proper investigation.

The American Medical Association has taken no action as a body to investigate the Koch Treatment on the other hand, through its Propaganda for Reform Department of the Journal of the American Medical Association, it gives instruction that no interest be shown since to do so would in its opinion, "simply serve to advertise Koch and give his 'cure' a dignity which is not in the public interest." Dr. Koch needs no advertisement to increase his private practice. The best advertisement any physician can have is the testimony of grateful patients. But in the interest of the many cancer sufferers who are now being denied this means of help, it would seem the duty of the American Medical Association to appoint a special committee to work co-jointly with a committee of the Koch Cancer Foundation, an organization of licensed physicians, who are making personal observations in their private practice as to the efficacy of the synthetic antitoxin in the treatment of cancer.

Dr. Field suggests a joint committee be empowered to undertake a thorough and complete investigation of Dr. Koch's work during the past ten years, that the committee inaugurate a clinic where a large number of desperate cases could be treated and studied from a laboratory standpoint for, a period of one year, and that the report of this joint committee at the end of the year should have a bearing on the restoration of Dr. Koch to his membership

in medical bodies and on the judgment to be rendered by Organized Medicine as to the efficacy of the treatment.

Until something of this kind is done, the formula will be a secret, Dr. Koch and many of his co-workers may be ostracized by Organized Medicine, and cancer sufferers that might otherwise be saved by the use of the antitoxin will continue to succumb from a curable disease. These are some of the things that medical ethics may mean. Life is a precious thing. Is there any law higher than the duty to save life? Every physician should investigate for himself what has actually been accomplished by the medical treatment of cancer by the use of a synthetic antitoxin, a serum, or by the use of drugs and diet. If the truth were known, if hospitals received and treated cancer sufferers by these methods as readily as they do by destructive methods, in the opinion of the Journal, they would soon issue a very different set of statistics as the percentage of cases of cancer that are cured and remain cured over a period of years.

Why not treat by these methods at least the cases, which have been pronounced inoperable and hopeless by those who use surgery, X-ray and radium? If the case is hopeless, there can be no objection using an antitoxin of which the formula is not known. In this way data may be gathered as to its efficacy. The Koch Cancer Foundation has the distribution of 23,000 free doses of the "antitoxin" for charity cases. If the value of the "antitoxin" can be thus proven, Organized Medicine will have to give heed and make it possible for the treatment to be dedicated to the medical profession. To publish the formula for the synthetic antitoxin for cancer would avail nothing in the interest of medical practice for its preparation involves a difficult technique. Those unacquainted with the technique, even though learned in photochemistry, might have to try many, many times before they could produce time after time a uniformly potent product. Some might never succeed. For this reason, the Koch Laboratories have been incorporated to manufacture synthetic antitoxins. The synthetic antitoxin for cancer is dispensed through the Koch Cancer Foundation.