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Medical War News

Source: *The British Medical Journal*, Vol. 2, No. 1957 (Jul. 2, 1898), p. 46

Published by: [BMJ](#)

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20255160>

Accessed: 07/02/2015 12:16

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MEDICAL WAR NEWS.

REPORTED OUTBREAK OF YELLOW FEVER AMONG THE
AMERICAN TROOPS IN CUBA.

It is announced from Madrid, under date of June 28th, that a telegram from Santiago de Cuba states that 300 men in General Shafter's army are suffering from yellow fever. General Shafter himself, however, telegraphed to Washington on the same date that the health of the troops is remarkably good, there being fewer than 150 men on the sick list.

News has come from Monte Video that at the request of the Spanish Government a quantity of Dr. Sanarelli's serum against yellow fever has been sent to Cuba.

A PERMANENT NAVAL HOSPITAL CORPS.

Senator Hale recently reported a Bill providing for the organisation of a hospital corps for the navy, which has already passed the house. The Naval Committee recommends favourable action on the measure, but proposes to amend it by striking out the provision disbanding the corps at the expiration of the present war, thus making the corps permanent.

RECORDS OF SICK AND WOUNDED IN TIME OF WAR.

The Act of the United States Congress, approved April 22nd, 1898, authorising the organisation of the volunteer army, requires all regimental and other medical officers serving with volunteer troops in the field or elsewhere, to keep a daily record of all soldiers reported sick or wounded, as shown by the morning calls or reports, which records at the disbandment of the organisations will be filed in the record and pension division of the War Department. To permit of this ultimate disposition of the medical records of the volunteers without interfering with the medical histories of men belonging to the regular army medical officers, who may have under their care patients belonging to both organisations, will have to keep a separate set of records for each organisation. The Surgeon-General of the army has therefore called upon the surgeons in charge of general hospitals to have separate registers of patients, and monthly reports of sick and wounded made for regular and volunteer troops. Similar instructions have been issued to surgeons in charge of hospitals in the field in which regulars and volunteers are likely to be treated side by side. In time of peace monthly reports of sick and wounded are required to be forwarded in duplicate, one copy to the Chief Surgeon and the other direct to the Surgeon-General; but during the war only one copy is called for, to be forwarded from general hospitals direct to the Surgeon-General and from field hospitals to the Surgeon-General through chief surgeons.

MEDICAL ATTENDANCE ON SOLDIERS' FAMILIES.

According to the *Toledo Medical and Surgical Reporter* for June, at a recent meeting of the Toledo Medical Association a resolution was passed offering to the General Citizens' Relief Committee the free services of medical practitioners to such families of soldiers as they may recommend as being in need of gratuitous medical attention.

BAKING OF BREAD IN THE FIELD.

The special correspondent of the *Medical News* (June 11th) at Tampa (Captain and Assistant-Surgeon H. T. Raymond) gives an interesting account of the baking of bread in the field with the portable ovens described in the *Manual for Army Cooks* issued by the United States War Department. Brigade-Commissary First Lieutenant Arthur Johnson, 17th Infantry, finding that his regiment was taxed 100 lbs. of bread for the baking of 106 lbs. of flour by a civilian baker, purchased two small portable ovens of a capacity of 96 loaves each, and sufficient when worked by two soldiers to supply a regiment with its bread ration. These ovens were manufactured at Tampa at 24 hours' notice, and were readily "set up" underground in the field. The following is the description of the ovens and the method of using them as given in the *Manual* referred to:

The body of each oven is made of two pieces of $\frac{1}{4}$ inch sheet iron (sheet steel). These sheets are 5 feet long by 2 feet 6 inches wide, and so curved that, when their upper edges are connected and the lower edges fixed in the ground, they form an arch, the span of which is 3 feet 3 inches, and the rise 1 foot 4 inches. The lower edge of each sheet is bent outwards into a flange, so as to secure a firm rest on the ground. On the inside of

each sheet are riveted three longitudinal bars, 1 inch wide and $\frac{3}{4}$ inch thick, and on the outside five transverse ribs, $1\frac{1}{4}$ inch wide by $\frac{3}{4}$ inch thick. The upper ends of the transverse ribs on one of the sheets are formed into hooks, and those other sheets into eyes, by means of which the sheets are securely attached to each other along the ridge of the oven when erected. (The front of the oven is closed by a sheet iron or steel door with a handle.) When the soil is of clay or of other favourable quality, the rear end of the oven may be closed by the natural earth, but if it is sandy or loose, a sheet-iron plate will be required to close it. No chimney is necessary. When set up, the whole, excepting the door, is covered with a mass of earth 8 inches in thickness.

The depth of the earth is named for the reason that a larger quantity would be liable, from its weight, to bend the iron when heated, and a smaller quantity would allow too much heat to escape. An excavation 3 or 4 feet in depth should be made a foot or two from the door for the convenience of the baker. Two hours are required for heating the oven at first starting, but for each heating immediately following one hour will be sufficient. A small quantity of wood is placed in the oven at the extreme rear, and ignited, the door being kept open to afford a draught and a vent for the smoke. Small quantities of wood should then be added as combustion progresses. In this way the fuel will burn more freely and the oven be heated quicker than if all the fuel necessary for the heating were put in at once. As soon as the oven is at a white heat the ashes should be raked out, the floor swept clean or the sheet-iron floor put in, and the dough in pans introduced. The time required for each baking is about forty-five minutes. The oven can be erected and prepared for use in fifteen minutes, and if kept in constant operation for twenty-four hours can bake sufficient bread for 1,000 men. By the use of two of these ovens, therefore, a regiment of 1,000 men, if it make a halt of fourteen hours each day, can be supplied with fresh bread daily on the line of march. Ordinary kneading troughs can be made and placed on trestles, or they may be fixed on the ground and trenches excavated near them for the kneaders to stand in.

Compressed yeast may be used under ordinary circumstances, but it should be kept on ice. The rising with this yeast will take from four to six hours. It is more practicable, however, for troops going into Cuba to make use of a dry yeast (yeast foam, yeast powder) that is guaranteed not to deteriorate for three months from time of manufacture. The rising process with the dry yeast will consume eight or ten hours. A hospital tent should be allowed for a bakery, and two men from the fighting force can well be spared as bakers.

LITERARY NOTES.

ONE of the first books revised in accordance with the new *Pharmacopœia* is that of Dr. Hale White, the third edition of his *Materia Medica, Pharmacy, Pharmacology, and Therapeutics* having just been published. Other works in the press based upon the *Pharmacopœia 1898* include a new book entitled *Practical Pharmacy*, by Mr. E. W. Lucas, Examiner to the Pharmaceutical Society; the twelfth edition of Beasley's *Pocket Formulary and Synopsis of the British and Foreign Pharmacopœias*, revised by Mr. J. O. Braithwaite; the seventeenth edition of Squire's *Companion to the British Pharmacopœia*; it is not expected that this will be issued before the end of September. The publishers of these works will be Messrs. J. and A. Churchill.

Dr. Ernest Bark (Birmingham) writes with reference to the article on Sir John Floyer, which appeared in the *BRITISH MEDICAL JOURNAL* of June 18th:

In your article on Sir John Floyer there is mentioned a receipt book—"Collections from our Country Receipt books and salmon (?)." I have a book published in 1685 by William Salmon, professor of physick at the Blue Balcony by the Ditch-side nigh Holbourne Bridge. This is a translation of the *Pharmacopœia Londinensis*, "together with some choice medicines added by the author," and is a very likely source from which Sir John Floyer might cull some of his prescriptions. It was a popular work, as the edition of 1685 was the third in nine years.

M. Laborde presented to the Académie de Médecine at its meeting on June 21st a work which will shortly be published entitled *Léon Gambetta: Biographie psychologique; Le Cerveau, La Parole, la Fonction et l'Organe; Histoire Authentique de la Maladie et de la Mort*. The work is the outcome of a minute examination of the brain of the deceased statesman, who was one of the original members of the Société d'Autopsie, a body of distinguished men who engage to leave their brains to be anatomised for the advancement of science. M. Laborde states that in the case of Gambetta the exceptional development of the faculty of speech corresponds to a proportionate development of the organ.

The *procès verbal* of the ratification of the International Sanitary Convention of Paris, 1894, and the supplementary declaration of October, 1897, was signed in Paris on June 20th by the Ambassadors of Germany, Austria-Hungary, Spain, Italy, and Russia, and the Ministers of Greece, Holland, Portugal, Persia, and the British plenipotentiaries.