

THE DOPING

This topical matter has been discussed recently in a most interesting manner in L'Équipe of Paris; the various points discussed seem to us so interesting that we are quoting herewith a few extracts of this article:

'The first mention of the term 'doping' dates back to 1890, and concerns the long and exacting sport events calling for endurance. Since then, the disastrous habit of doping has taken root and from being an occasional practice has now become a regular habit in certain sport circles, particularly in the cycling world. It is an acknowledge fact that, when cyclists turn professionals, they resort to the doping practice more and more, in proportion to the increase of the competitive character of the event. This established fact has been recognized by Dr. Ronneaux.

Dr. Ruffier, well-known personality in the cycling world, comes to the conclusion that one should definitely dismiss all idea of prestige brought by doping. If the use of amphetamines has been the cause of some improvement in the case of certain records, it has also caused accidents, chiefly, due to taking overdoses of this medicament too frequently. It is imperative to make sportsmen realize that the use of doping does not spell unflinching good results and success, since it often happens that success is followed by a period of depression and that the real danger lies in the fact that it is necessary to take stronger doses in order to get over this depression, which, in time, will only make him feel stale. Dr. J. L. Bardy, barrister-in-law, in his findings concerning his enquiries into the doping business, lays stress on the fact that the use of drugs and artificial stimulants constitutes a breach of the legislative measures in force at the present time. In certain cases, trainers manage to obtain by illicit means certain toxic products, thus making an illegal use of the practice of giving medicaments

to the competitive cyclists without proper medical supervision. In other cases, the doctors or chemists themselves are the guilty parties when they complacently supply medicaments and drugs, the sale of which is forbidden to the public unless a medical certificate is obtained. By doing so without it, the foregoing are also guilty of breaking their professional pledges.

All federations are against the use of doping, and as a rule everybody disapproves of the practice of taking drugs and artificial stimulants. It is the duty of the medical profession to point out to the public the risks it runs when resorting to doping, also that it will defeat the object sought for as well as leave disastrous after-effects.

As for the sanctions punishing this offence, they are difficult to apply because the addicted to drugs is rarely found out. When he or the guilty parties, who give or supply the drugs, are discovered, it ought to fall within the competence of the medical profession to prosecute the responsible parties on the charge of illegal medical practice and to apply severe sanctions, going as far as imprisonment for attempt to injure a person's health. This penalty may give cause to reflection with the facetious advisers.

We fully agree with l'ÉQUIPE which states: A wide publicity to such investigations serves the purpose to enlighten the public and that is the reason why our paper seeks to give its best contribution with regard to this topical problem. (*We only reproduce an extract of this article.* Ed.) *We intend to resume the discussion of the matter after the findings of the International Physical sport Medecine Federation.*