

# The One Wicked Drug the Lawmakers Forgot

## How Only Two or Three States Have Statutes Aimed at the Insidious Mexican Hasheesh Which Wrecks the Lives of Its Victims Even More Quickly Than Cocaine, Heroin or Opium



Franz Stuck's symbolic painting of the underworld's horrors, to which a new and dreadful one is now added by the spread of the marijuana habit

WHEN the lawmakers of Congress and the various state legislatures framed the statutes designed to end the traffic in habit-forming drugs they thought they had made them comprehensive enough to include every narcotic known to man.

But now it has been discovered that, as far as the national laws and those of all except two or three of the states are concerned, they overlooked one of the wickedest of drugs—one that is in many ways more insidious in its lust and more ruinous in its effects than cocaine, heroin, opium, morphine or any of the others.

The wicked drug the lawmakers forgot is marihuana, the Mexican variety of *Cannabis indica*, or Indian hemp, commonly known as hasheesh. In the Orient hasheesh has been used for thousands of years. There it is rolled into pills and swallowed, or mixed with sugar and eaten like candy.

The Mexicans, however, have a different way of drugging themselves with marihuana and getting its extraordinary effects. They break off the tops of the plant, crumple them up like tobacco and roll them into cigarettes.

It is in the form of cigarettes that marihuana is now coming into widespread use in this country, and because the little paper-wrapped rolls of the drug look so much like an ordinary tobacco cigarette the traffic in them is likely to prove hard to stamp out even after the necessary laws are enacted.

In America these marihuana cigarettes are called either "flying cigarettes" or "Mary Warner smokes." The "Mary Warner" it will be seen, is American slang, and is derived from the word marihuana, which has a similar sound. They are called "flying" because of the floating sensation their fumes produce.

The effects of the drug are startling, and while they may differ in individuals, the general characteristics are nearly always the same. After three or four puffs the beginner's mind becomes confused. There is, at first, a harmless sort of mental exhilaration. All the worries and sordidness in the user's life fade away. He finds himself floating through space as if on a cloud and doing everything, in fancy, that he ever wanted to do.

Ideas follow each other rapidly. Time, however, is unbelievably prolonged. Minutes seem like days; hours like weeks and days like years. An excellent idea of this prolongation of time is seen by comparing an ordinary motion picture film with that of the so-called slow motion camera.

Then comes a period in which hallucinations dominate the addict. Motiveless merriment or maudlin emotion usually follows, after which a pugnacious attitude ensues. It is this stage that endangers society. It is the stage which made the cowboys of our frontiers quick to adopt the Mexican word "loco" (crazy) which is applied to peons and Indians who run amuck. Cattle, too, have been known to run amuck after eating the plant.

Reaction following the use of marihuana gravely endangers the morals and continuous indulgence brings catalepsy and incurable insanity. In confirmed addicts the complex of symptoms shows great similarity—a deathlike pallor, twitching muscles, furtive eyes with yellowish, red-streaked eyeballs, cat-

like nervousness and rapidity of speech.

The Mexican government, recognizing the seriousness of the situation, passed some years ago a law forbidding the cultivation of the hemp plant, but in spite of the stringent edict and drastic punishment imposed, it is still surreptitiously grown. This, with the large quantities of wild plants gathered, furnishes a supply ample enough for many thousands of users.

Most of the drug finds its way into the United States across the Rio Grande River and Lower California border. Some of the crop-gathered in southern Mexico is smuggled into our ports—principally New York—by sailors touching at Mexican ports from where it is disseminated.

The story of two American college girls who were recently snared in the coils of this soul-destroying agency is a good example of how "flying cigarettes" claim their victims and at the same time will serve as a warning to others to be on their guard against them. Both of these girls aided the New York police in making the arrest of a notorious international drug carrier who is now in the state prison at Sing Sing. They have been recalled through the Metropolitan Hospital, long famous for its cures of drug addicts, and are again back in school.

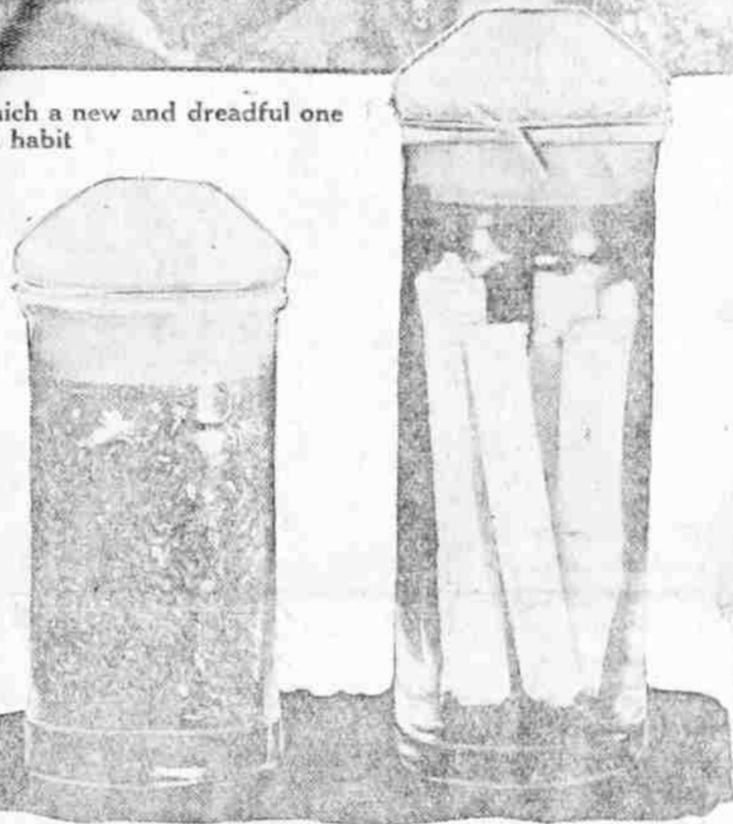
"We had heard so much of Mexican meals from our friends," says one of these girls, "that one Sunday evening we decided to go to one of them, near Tenth Street, and sample some of their national dishes. It seemed to us like any other restaurant, orderly and regular in every respect.

"We enjoyed the meal. The dishes were a novelty to us. As the waiter brought the coffee my friend found that she forgotten her cigarettes. "I was just about to give her one of mine when a well-dressed man about thirty, apparently a Mexican, who was sitting at a nearby table talking to a male companion, laid an elaborately ornamented cigarette case on the table in front of us.

"Won't you try a Mexican cigarette?" he asked politely. He left the case on the table and resumed his conversation with his friend, apparently paying not the slightest bit of attention to

either of us. "After a few moments my friend took one of the cigarettes and also handed one to me. They looked just the same as any of the popular brands made in this country. We lighted them.

"The first puff burned my throat slightly, but the feeling of exhilaration that followed far outweighed the 'burn' sensation. I had smoked about half of it when my companion's antics attracted my attention. She seemed to be bubbling over with merriment. Then



A jar of the powdered leaves of marihuana, seized by the New York police; and (on the right) cigarettes made from the leaves



Miss Catherine McDonald, a New York business girl and one of the latest victims of the cruel "drug drummers"

she became daring, saying all sorts of things to the people about her. Normally she is very backward about speaking to strangers.

"I managed to get her home, and it was there, in our room, that I learned she had brought a half dozen of the Mexican's cigarettes with her. We smoked them, too. That started us."

Marihuana is probably the only drug which is not included in the Federal narcotic bill, known as the Jones-Miller measure. The Harrison act, which has been in operation a number of years, does not include it either. New

York, Massachusetts, California and the city of Dallas, Texas, are the only places where there are specific laws and ordinances prohibiting the traffic in it.

The credit for discovering the extent to which marihuana is being used in this country and taking the first steps to stamp out the traffic in it is due to Dr. Carlton Simon, Deputy Commissioner of the New York police and head of the department's Narcotic Division.

The sudden popularity of marihuana among narcotic addicts was also largely due to the activities of Dr. Simon's staff in cutting off supplies of other drugs. Addicts recognized, too, that they could partake of the new dope in the form of cigarettes with little risk of detection, provided, of course, they did not take doses strong enough to make them pass into a coma. It is for this same reason, the deputy commissioner believes, that so many refined and cultured persons are easily tempted to use the cigarettes.

No work is more worthy of the commendation of all good citizens than that which the police of New York and other large cities are doing to stamp out the drug traffic. It is a task fraught with the greatest difficulties, for the business of dope smuggling is well organized and shrewdly managed, and the addicts will run almost any risk to keep supplied with their favorite drug.

Although the dope habit is one of the

chief vices that make the underworld so dreadful it is by no means confined to the criminal and derelict classes. In spite of the stringent laws and the eternal vigilance of the police an increasing number of addicts are being found in the most refined and cultured walks of life.

A pathetic instance of slavery to drugs was revealed in a London police court only a few days ago. Miss Cissie Loftus, the beautiful and talented actress who has so often appeared in this country and been much admired here, was arraigned on a charge of having drugs in her possession. She was released on suspended sentence on her promising to undergo treatment for the habit.

Catherine McDonald, a refined and pretty business girl, walked into a New York police station recently and asked to be arrested to prevent her stealing or doing something worse to satisfy her craving for drugs. The story she told threw interesting light on the wicked methods practiced by the "drug drummers."

At a dance a few weeks ago she met a "lovely girl" who revealed to her the magic of a needle that enabled one to dance all night, and by a second injection go to work next day as fresh and alert as ever. The needle, as Catherine McDonald later learned, held heroin, and after six days of its use she found herself unable to get along without regular doses of the drug.

