

BOOK REVIEWS

MALARIOLOGY

A. A. Sandosham and V. Thomas: *Malariology with special reference to Malaya*, 2nd Edition, 1982 Singapore University Press, Kent Ridge, Singapore XXVI + 382 pages, 49 Figs. XXI colour plates.

The first edition of this book, originally written by Professor A. A. Sandosham of the Department of Parasitology, Singapore and published by the University of Malaya Press in 1959 and reprinted with additions in 1965, has been the standard text in this country on malaria. It has been out of print for some years and much has happened in the field of malariology in this country since it first appeared.

Malaya had embarked on a malaria eradication programme in 1967, estimated to cost \$85 million, expecting to rid the country of the disease in 1982. Unfortunately, however, having spent more than \$150 million by the end of 1982, more than a third of the peninsula (area-wise) is still in the attack phase, and although it is claimed that 82.5% of the people are protected we still had 12,411 cases of malaria with 26 deaths.

Chloroquine-resistant falciparum malaria has made its appearance and has been shown to be both common and widespread in the country. New vectors of malaria have been identified, new species and sub-species of Anopheles have been described, the names of some species have been changed and records of species previously unknown in the country have been made. Much work has been done at the Institute for Medical Research, Kuala Lumpur on monkey malaria to determine if it could be a zoonosis.

Professor Sandosham, now in his seventy-eighth year of life, retired as Director of the IMR some years ago and has been joined by Assoc. Professor Vijayamma Thomas of the Department of Parasitology, University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur as co-author in the new edition of this book. Its appearance at this time is a great boon to anti-malaria workers in the country as we are now abandoning the W.H.O. time-limited 'eradication' programme and returning to a 'control' type of programme in which anti-larval measures will play an important part. This book retains much of the information gathered locally on the bionomics of the aquatic stages so necessary for a successful anti-

larval campaign.

This new edition updates the information on the natural history of malaria and the anophelines of Malaya which term includes Peninsular Malaysia and Singapore. Since the identification of malaria parasites is largely based on the examination of stained blood films the use of colour plates in the section 'Aids to the Identification of Malaria Parasites' is most valuable. At the end of each chapter a Bibliography has been added to include also references which will prove useful sources for further reading. A brief account is given of the malaria parasites of non-human primates. The W.H.O. philosophy of eradication of malaria, its comparison with control and the phases of an eradication programme are outlined. An account is also given of the Pilot Project, the Pre-eradication Survey and the Eradication Strategy in Malaya.

The original purpose of the book as a teaching manual for medical students and postgraduates preparing for a career in public health remains unchanged. The book will also be useful to all anti-malaria workers in the country including health inspectors, laboratory technicians, health officers, estate medical officers and private medical practitioners who deal with patients from rural areas and estates. At a cost of M\$30.00 it is a good investment.

P. C. Y. CHEN

MENTAL FIRST AID MANUAL

David Reuben: *Mental First Aid Manual: Instant Relief from twenty-five of life's worst problems*. New York. MacMillan Publishing Co. Inc., 1982, 255 pages. Hard Cover US\$13.50

An "author of six bestsellers" in the field of human sexuality and nutrition, Dr. Reuben, a former U.S. Air Force psychiatrist now comes out with a contemporary American book on self management of twenty-five of life's problems. These range from anxiety, depression, envy, money, serious illness to unhappy love affairs.

I do not agree with all of the assumptions that the book made; for example, about the increasing numbers of Americans who rejected priests,

ministers and rabbis as dependable emotional guides in times of severe distress. Neither did the book list among alternatives to the traditional sources of emotional and psychosocial help, the other workers in the mental health field like social workers, psychologists and counsellors nor friends and relatives.

Dr. Reuben wrote that "This Mental First-Aid Manual is designed to help you cope with emotional accidents. It provides - succinctly, authoritatively and precisely - what you need to know to regain control, confidence and serenity in the face of life's lowest blows".

The chapter on serious illness is useful and it leads to the equally insightful last chapter, "Beyond Mental First-Aid". True to the spirit of a Manual, six steps, with explanations are listed after the paragraph about what to do about a serious illness that affects you or someone dear to you. After dealing with the immediate steps, (e.g. find out the real facts of the condition and ask questions from your doctors, anyone else you can find as well as reading up about your condition), the fifth step, "Be prepared to sacrifice" not only advises a person

"to do whatever is necessary to overcome your disease" but also to change to health-promoting habits and life-style. Beyond, Mental First-Aid, discusses the differences between modern and traditional life-style. Tracing the meaning of modern to mode, meaning fashionable. Modern life style implies materialistic and self-indulgent behaviour. Traditional life-style involves spiritual and inter-personal concern. The consequences of the two life-styles differ and we have to make our choice.

Maybe, by attracting us to the need of instant action (mental first aid), Dr. Reuben has shown us the option (life-style).

This is a thought provoking book that will benefit not only doctors and patients but any adult who will think and discuss about the solutions proposed. On the other hand, there is no need for most of us to buy this costly hard cover book instantly. I hope that an economical paper-back may be available soon.

T. H. WOON

ABSTRACT

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TIMING OF ANTENATAL TETANUS IMMUNIZATION FOR EFFECTIVE PROTECTION OF THE NEONATE

Bulletin of the World Health Organization, 61(1): 159-165 (1983).

A study was undertaken to determine the relationship between the timing of maternal immunization with a commercially available adsorbed tetanus toxoid and the presence of protective antitoxin in cord blood. Women at various stages of gestation were given one or two doses of 20 IU of toxoid, and the maternal and cord sera collected at delivery were assayed for tetanus antitoxin by the indirect haemagglutination and toxin neutralization techniques.

Results indicated that the first injection of a two-dose schedule should be given at least 60 days, and

preferably 90 days or more before delivery, with the second injection 20 days or more before delivery. The single-dose schedule conferred no significant protection when given less than 70 days before delivery; beyond 70 days, protection rates improved, but there were too few subjects to allow any definite conclusions to be made.

Cord and maternal antitoxin titres differed by no more than one twofold dilution for almost all of the individual paired sera. A cord/maternal antitoxin ratio of 2 was more likely to occur with increasing time between the second injection and delivery.