Clinical and other Notes.

EARLY TREATMENT OF MALARIA.

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The following notes on malaria in the Transjordan Frontier Force may be of interest:—

From April 15 to July 31, the whole or part of the Transjordan Frontier Force was engaged, in conjunction with the Royal Air Force, in active operations against the Druzes at Azrak in the Arabian Desert. This Azrak is a large oasis with very large pools or tanks of almost stagnant water surrounded by dense masses of reeds and bushes. It is a most notoriously malarious country, and while there I examined all children under the age of 12 and found that the splenic index was sixty-nine per cent.

The Transjordan Frontier Force at Azrak consisted of headquarters, "A," "B," and "C" Companies. As soon as the operations were over, the force returned to its headquarters at Zerka in the following order: Headquarters and "B" Company, May 25; "C" Company, July 5; "A" Company, July 31.

During the period May 25 to July 31, there were four cases of malaria at Azrak.

Now Zerka, the headquarters of the Transjordan Frontier Force, is undoubtedly a very malarious place. The splenic index, in the village, of children under 12 being forty-three per cent. The breeding occurs along the bank of the river Zerka, and also in the seepage from irrigation channels, which lead from the river to the various fruit and vegetable gardens. Every effort is made to keep this breeding in check by canalization, Paris green and oil, and very few adult mosquitoes are found in the camp. The two anophelines found were A. superpictus and A. sergentii.

On August 20 patients were being admitted to hospital in Zerka at a somewhat alarming rate, and between that date and September 10 seventy-one men were admitted with malaria out of a total strength of 600.

An analysis of the location of these cases showed an enormous preponderance of men from "A" Company who, as it will be remembered, were the last to leave Azrak, i.e., on July 31.

As will be seen by the accompanying chart, the number of cases occurring in each company shows a direct relation to the dates of their return from Azrak, companies being approximately of the same strength:—
Before commencing early malarial treatment with "A" Company

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It appeared to us then that as “A” Company had returned last from Azrak, when mosquito breeding was at its height, in all probability the whole company was infected with the malaria parasite, so on September 10 it was decided to put the whole company on quin. sulph., in liquid form, ten grains morning and evening. The results fully justified this. From September 10 to October 10 “A” Company had five cases, against fifty that attended from August 20 to September 10.

When this quinine treatment was commenced it was realized that the treatment was not prophylactic, but should rather be regarded as early treatment, on the assumption that though the patient was infected, the parasites had not yet reached sufficient numbers in the blood to cause clinical symptoms. It was therefore considered necessary to give a modified full course of quinine so that twenty grains per diem was continued for ten days, and then twenty grains two days a week for three months. This course is still being continued.

The accompanying chart is self-explanatory, and indicates, I think, that the majority of these cases were infected in Azrak. I would be very glad of any opinions on this, for as Zerka is the permanent headquarters of the Transjordan Frontier Force, it is of course a very important point.

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A NEW USE FOR OIL DRUMS.

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WHERE there are oil companies it is always possible to obtain oil barrels. These have been made use of at Karachi in the embarkation compound for boilers and refuse bins.

The first photograph shows that out of these oil drums three very satisfactory boilers were constructed for the troops’ kitchen, the capacity of each boiler being forty-five gallons (for boiling forty gallons). Two of these were used for boiling water and one was used for cooking potatoes. Five hundred and nineteen pounds of potatoes can be boiled in one boiler at one time. Usual time one hour with wood fuel.

In the second photograph, an oil drum is shown as a dustbin. The advantages of this are: first, self-cleaning; second, self-emptying. By lifting up the handle catch and rotating the handle the drum turns over, the lid opens and the contents are thrown into the sweeper’s basket placed under the bin, or the contents are thrown out on to the asphalt base and swept up for removal.