Correspondence


This volume contains a detailed account of the transactions of the great American National Library at Washington for the fiscal year ending June, 1929. It includes a large amount of information of interest to the bibliophile and to the student of history, upon which it would be impossible to comment here.

Correspondence.

AN EXPERIMENT IN THE PROPHYLAXIS OF MALARIA.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "JOURNAL OF THE ROYAL ARMY MEDICAL CORPS."

SIR,—Whilst having no objection to reasonable, and reasoned, criticism, I do claim the hospitality of your pages for my protection against certain misrepresentations by Major T. O. Thompson and Captain P. F. A. Grant in their article, "The Cantonment Anti-malaria Problem—Afterthoughts."

To make the matter as short as possible and refer only to one subject; in the second part of their article, published in the Journal for June, 1930, they refer, in no measured terms, to my paper, "An Experiment in the Prophylaxis of Malaria." After remarking on my paper they briefly refer the reader, and presumably me in particular, as an item of new information, to Yorke and Macfie’s findings on the influence of quinine on the malarial sporozoite and developing merozoite. Yorke’s actual words on this subject were quoted in full in the introduction to, and as the basis for, the experiment described in my paper.

They describe my experiment as follows: "This consisted of the administration of quinine, thirty grains daily, for eight days after leaving the last malarious camp, up and down, on a certain hill journey, i.e., to cover ‘the normal incubation period,’" and then proceed to remark on what they consider, apparently and without justification, to be my conception of the incubation period of malaria.

Omitting unnecessary words which I think no one could take to conceal or modify the sense in any way, the relevant portion of my article reads:—

"The procedure adopted was to administer a curative dose of quinine to cover the end of the normal incubation period of the disease; . . . for eight days commencing a week after they had quitted the last of the malarious camps on the road they would be given, after breakfast and tea,
Correspondence

a medicine to prevent them from getting malaria... it contained... fifteen grains of quinine sulphate and three minims of the acid solution of arsenic..." (The italics, in both instances, are mine).

I do not propose to enter into further discussion with the authors on the subject matter of their article, very debatable as much of it is; but I do crave your permission, Sir, to suggest to Major Thompson and Captain Grant that their arguments and statements would carry more weight if they would take care to refresh their memories accurately as to recorded facts at the time of sharpening their pens, and wits, in the future.

Quetta, I am, etc.,
July 1, 1930.
R. A. Mansell,
Major, R.A.M.C.
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