

sarily.

(3) Starting a course too late and by its failure bringing the method into disrepute.

#### Summary

As a result of more than ten-years experience in both techniques, my advice for the busy doctor is as follows:

1. Reserve the employment of the Morrison-Ritchie autogenous vaccine technique entirely for those patients whose colds invariably track down or whose ailments are also made worse.

2. But do not institute this technique unless you are able to ensure an exact copy of the full technique of making the vaccine as set out in Dr Morrison-Ritchie's original paper (*Lancet*, 1958).

3. And you are prepared to carry out loyally his whole treatment schedule.

4. This includes careful adjustment by

reduction or even prolonged pauses in the course of treatment according to the patient's reaction.

Failure in either of these two stipulations will only lead to disappointments.

5. Only use the Stanley Banks antibiotic technique when you are sure of the intelligent collaboration of your patient.

6. In your selected cases, make sure each has a reserve of the eight 250 mg capsules in a suitable container and that he will report each time after he has completed a course.

7. Ensure, as far as possible, that the patient is really able to recognize the prodromal symptoms of a genuine common cold and will start the capsules within six hours (maximum 12).

8. Under these simple rules, there will be a high measure of satisfactory practical results.

C. B. HEALD.

## Book reviews

**Textbook of contraceptive practice.** JOHN PEEL AND M. PORTS. Cambridge. Cambridge University Press. 1969. Pp. xiii+297. Price: Cloth £1 10s.; Paperback 18s. 0d.

This publication is a notable achievement. The preface states that it "is an attempt to bring together the most important and up-to-date information on clinical and sociological aspects of the control of fertility—contraception, sterilization and abortion". In this the authors have undoubtedly succeeded and it is a source of astonishment that they should have chosen a title which implies a much more restricted field.

The book starts with a fascinating historical review leading up to a consideration of the biological and sociological aspects of fertility and population growth. Chapters on each of the major contraceptive methods are preceded by a description of the techniques of evaluation. The calculation of use-effectiveness is explained. The authors refuse to countenance the distinction between patient-failure and method-failure. A failure is a failure. There are chapters on sterilization, abortion and the legal and administrative aspects of birth control. A separate chapter is devoted to the medical and psychosexual problems which may be revealed during a family planning consultation, although throughout the book each topic in turn is rightly shown to be a part of preventive medicine.

The style is clear, consistent, forthright, deceptively easy, and thoroughly enjoyable. It

is remarkable how every page reveals something fresh and this is a tribute to the author's most extensive review of the world literature which is listed in the valuable bibliography. The text is peppered throughout with statistical quotations which permit a logical assessment where formerly emotional opinion held sway. Far from being tiresome, this statistical material is stimulating and authoritative.

In the final chapter the authors summarize the present position and gaze into the future. This should be the outstanding part of the book, and it is a pity that it is not quite so balanced as the remainder. Taking account of the risk of death in pregnancy and the respective contraceptive failure rates, they produce a table showing the mortality risk of each contraceptive method and of uncontrolled fertility. The Pill emerges triumphantly at the top of the table. Unfortunately they have to admit that the data on which the table is based is uncertain and incomplete. They are right, however, in suggesting that a much higher mortality risk from the Pill would still be tolerable, but they overlook the fact that where the risk of death is very small, mortality rates are a very poor measure of the quality of any medical endeavour. It may well be that when comparative *morbidity* is considered a very different picture will emerge.

The real importance of this book is that it has established fertility control as an important

academic medical discipline in its own right and the medical schools must look again into their training programmes and see if they have got their priorities balanced. It is arguable whether this is an entirely suitable text for the undergraduate, but it is undoubtedly compulsory reading for the undergraduate teacher. It will certainly play a part in the training of the obstetrician, but it is in general practice that its main influence should be felt. The subject deserves at least as much attention in vocational training schemes, and in subsequent practice, as infant welfare and antenatal care and the College must ensure that the topic is adequately represented in its membership examination.

The last words should go to a quoted statement from the American Medical Association, "An intelligent recognition of the problems that relate to human reproduction, including the need for population control, is more than a matter of responsible parenthood. It is a matter of responsible medical practice".

**Modern perspectives in international child psychiatry.** Edited by JOHN G. HOWELLS, M.D., D.P.M. Edinburgh. Oliver & Boyd. 1969. Pp. 878. Price £8 8s. 0d.

This is the third volume of a series of five planned to cover the subject of psychiatry in world-wide scope. Authors are from both sides of the Atlantic, from Europe and Asia and from the further side of the Iron Curtain. There is risk that the scale can lead to reduction in value to the non-specialist reader. This has been largely avoided by each chapter being of the nature of a brief monograph, from 20 to barely 40 pages, usually with a brief introduction as to sources and opinions past and present. Each has a valuable bibliography and the whole is extensively indexed.

The book is divided into two main parts, the first entitled 'Psychopathology' and the second 'Clinical'. This division is somewhat arbitrary but it should add to ease of use both by the general reader and the expert. The place for this large volume is in the library of every postgraduate medical centre as far as the readership of this *Journal* is concerned. Quite apart from reference use the individual sections are usually of great interest to the general professional reader. For example D. H. Stott, professor at Guelph, Canada, writes on 'The child's hazards in utero' with recent facts and opinions on virology, drugs, maternal emotional and physical stresses and the uncertainty of associated methods and conclusions reached in research. 'Behaviour disorders', Stella Chess from New York University School of Medicine, is also concerned about the inadequacy of longitudinal studies. Other chapters may appeal to the reader because of their general application in family practice, such as 'Fathering' and 'Separation and deprivation' by the editor of this volume, John G. Howells who is director of family psychiatry, Ipswich. Others are of interest for

their unfamiliar social cultures, as 'Child rearing in the Kibbutz', Louis Miller, director of mental health services, Jerusalem, and 'Family dynamics', Kyoshi Makila and Keigo, Keio University, Japan.

In the clinical section subject matter is related throughout to the practical relationship. 'Development and breakdown of speech', by Moyra Williams, principal psychologist at Addenbrooke's Hospital, 'Sleep disturbances in children', Merlitta Spesling, clinical professor of psychiatry, State University of New York, 'Dysfunctions of parenting', Richard Goldston, Harvard Medical School and Boston Children's Medical Centre are all practical in application. The last named chapter covers battering, neglect and exploitation. 'Residential care of children' by Sven Ahnsjö of Stockholm shares with our own country's workers among children concern for risks of large groupings and adverse institutional results. Others such as 'The nature of child psychosis', Lauretta Bender, director of the children's unit, Creedmore State Hospital, New York, are unduly American in idiom and content to be of easy use to the average reader in this country. Something of the same drawback attaches to 'The child at school', John C. Glidewell who is professor of educational psychology, University of Chicago.

This brief selection of titles and authors is made to tempt the browsing reader as well as the expert seeker. The short life of the discipline of child psychiatry is apparent throughout. Scarcely formulated at the beginning of this century it has developed with great rapidity over little more than a generation. Its importance, not only in mental illness, but for understanding maturity in adult life is amply illustrated in this book with a splendid wealth of material.

**Cytotoxic drugs in the treatment of cancer.** E. BOESEN, M.B., B.S., and W. DAVIS, Ph.D. London. Edward Arnold Ltd. 1969. Pp. ix+208. Price £3 0s. 0d.

This book has been designed for the use of the physician who may be called upon to use cytotoxic agents in the treatment of cancer, and therefore the contents, being of a specialized nature, are not of direct interest to the general practitioner. The book aims to explain the chemical and biochemical background of the different drug-group actions and to assess the potentialities and limitations of each of these drug groups. The indications, side-effects and possible counter-measures required in respect of the different cytotoxic drugs are described and their use in the varied forms of cancer given in some detail.

The arrangement of the book is very good and although a highly specialized subject, the content is well written and accordingly easy to read.

For the general practitioner, the value of this book lies in the fact that it affords an up-to-date source of reference. For example, the family