

Nevertheless, a much longer period of observation is necessary before confident statements on the safety of the Pill could be contemplated."

He goes on to suggest that the study should continue for another seven years and that there should be no publication of results in the meantime.

Surely his judgment is wrong in this?

The women of this country should be told now about the results of the study. In seven years time the Pill may well be obsolete as a form of contraception and the results will then be of value to no one. In the meantime women are continually worried by alarming statements in the national press about the dangers of the Pill, which are certainly not based on anything like 25,000 women-years experience.

Dr Kay says: "We believe that publication of our results would prejudice the continuation of the study by biasing the participating doctors". This is surely a very minor and secondary consideration compared to the importance of letting women have more information about the Pill as soon as possible.

A. P. MILLAR.

Benson,
Oxford, OX9 6SA

The language of Research

Sir,

As every schoolboy knows, Alphonse Karr, in 1849, coined the useful and elegant little phrase, *plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose*. This was a successful exercise in communication because he knew what he meant, you know what he meant, and I know what he meant. All the customers were satisfied. Now the Research Unit in its little sub-title (The Diagnostic Index) comes up with a new one, *tout ça change, tout c'est Le même chose*. This is not so good. I don't know what it means, I am doubtful if you do, and horribly

afraid that *they* don't. Admittedly Alphonse had the advantage of being a Frenchman, and of knowing that *chose* is feminine, and though we may boggle at the illogical and ungallant conduct of that usually courteous people making 'a thing' feminine, it does, and we are stuck with it.

In my usual simple and trusting way, I struggle to remain confident that the Research Unit checks its scientific references more thoroughly than would appear to be the case with its literary ones. I hope.

JOHN MILES.

World Conference on General Practice

Sir,

The closing date for submission of papers for the 5th World Conference on General Practice has been extended to January 1, 1972.

Intending participants are asked to submit their papers for selection in the form that has been detailed and included with the Social Programme which is now being distributed.

If you are unable to obtain a copy of this information, or you require further details, please write to

The Executive Secretary,
5th World Conference on General Practice,
254 Albert St.,
East Melbourne, Vic., 3002, Australia.

Registrations will be received up to the time of the Conference, but late registrations will incur a late fee. The previously advertised closing date has been cancelled.

The administration greatly appreciates early registration, so please forward your completed forms as soon as possible, or at least notify us of your intention to register. Accommodation cannot be guaranteed after June 30, 1972, and will depend on availability.

JON A. BAKER.

Book reviews

A first notebook of head injury. Second edition.
K. G. JAMIESON, M.D., M.S., F.R.A.C.S., F.A.C.S.
London. Butterworth & Co. Ltd. 1971.
Pp. vii + 148. Price: £1.60.

This paperback, written by an Australian neurosurgeon, presents the problems of head-injury in an original way. Part I deals with the coverings of the brain, ie, scalp injuries, fractures, extra-dural haematoma etc. Part II is concerned with damage to the brain itself. Part III with the clinical course of these conditions. Part IV with physiology and nursing care, and Part V with general management of the patient, special investigations, rehabilitation, etc.

J. ROY. COLL. GEN. PRACTIT., 1971, 21, 687

The book is a well-designed and carefully thought-out survey of the subject by a man who is obviously master of it. There are few general practitioners, especially those working in isolated areas, who will not benefit from reading it. In Australia the vast distances make an early assessment of head-injury even more important than in the UK—it is for this reason that the operative treatment of extra-dural and sub-dural haematoma are described in some detail.

The text is enlivened by line-drawings, some purely informative, some slightly whimsical, as where the 'unresponsive pupil' is illustrated by a schoolgirl asleep at her desk and the 'roving eye'