

ABSTRACTS

The Determination of the Chronaxy in the Diagnosis of Leprosy by
A. Dubois.

The author has applied the method of chronaxy, that is to say the period of latency between the application of an electrical stimulus to a muscle and the contraction of the same, to the diagnosis of early cases of leprosy. He finds it a useful method of confirming diagnosis and considers that it may possibly also furnish elements useful in prognosis and in understanding the pathology of the disease.

The Effects of Cortisone and ACTH upon the Eye Symptoms in Leprosy
by **Einosuke Shionuma, Masao Arai and Nobuko Ito.**

The authors found in 65 patients that local treatment with cortisone produced very remarkable effects upon iridocyclitis, upper

scleritis due to reactions in lepromatous leprosy. It was of no use however in keratitis. ACTH was also useful in three patients in these same conditions. This fact is taken to confirm the assumption that erythema nodosum leprosum is an allergic inflammation.

A Comparison of Vaccination with Vole Bacillus and B.C.G. Vaccines.

British Medical Journal, Jan. 1955, p. 133. By **H. W. O. Frew, J. R. Davidson and J. T. W. Reid.**

This report describes an investigation designed to compare vaccination with B.C.G. and vole bacillus vaccines, and records the preliminary results after one and two years. The rate of conversion after vole vaccination is a little slower than after B.C.G., but the percentages (95 per cent after six weeks and 100 per cent after twelve weeks)—are very satisfactory and compare closely with those obtained with B.C.G. Induration developed in a proportion of cases receiving vole vaccination by the multiple-puncture method, and later lupoid reactions occurred in the vaccination area. These occurred in 5 per cent after the first year and 15 per cent after the second year. This result occurring in arms regarded as healed at the first yearly inspection was unexpected and unfortunate, and has resulted in temporary suspension of the use of the vaccine.

The Effect of Pyridoxine on the Action of Isoniazid by **J. Ungar, E. G. Tomich, K. R. Parkin and P. W. Muggleton.**

Both in man and in experimental animals side reactions have been reported after Isoniazid treatment. It has been found that pyridoxine in suitable doses appears to counteract those side effects in animals. Pyridoxine does not interfere with the direct anti-tuberculous activity in isoniazid in vitro, or in infected mice. The authors suggest that pyridoxine could be tried without adverse effect in the isoniazid treatment of patients who show intolerance to this drug.

Attempts to make positive the lepromin reaction in lepromatous cases.

Le Semana Medica, 106, p. 401. By **S. Schujman.**

The author claims that by repeated injections of various acid-fast bacilli (tubercle bacillus, rat leprosy bacillus, etc.) in lepromatous cases of leprosy, it is possible to sensitise the patient to lepromin so that the late lepromin reaction becomes positive. He claims to have converted negative lepromin reactions into positive in 55 per cent of cases.

Evolution des Méthodes de Prophylaxie de la Lèpre. Annales de la Société Belge de Médecine Tropicale, Vol. XXXIV, 5, 1954, 144, p. 565. By **A. Dubois.**

Dr. Dubois comments on the hopeful prospects of bringing leprosy under control. At the Red Cross station Népoko, in the Belgian Congo, in 1919, there was a rate of 4 per cent of leprosy. It is calculated that there are 150,862 patients with leprosy in the Belgian Congo, of which only about 6.41 per cent were lepromatous. The method employed formerly was to isolate in leprosaria not only those who were highly infectious lepromatous cases, but also those less infectious. With the advent of sulphones in 1946 the situation was considerably changed. Dr. Dubois states that it is now possible to change highly infectious cases into only slightly infectious ones, and to treat those with only few bacilli as out-patients. There is also no doubt it is possible to render negative or nearly so all open cases. It is now possible to envisage with confidence the rapid diminution of leprosy in the same way that in the last century sleeping sickness has almost disappeared. The two factors in ridding the country entirely of leprosy are active treatment, and at the same time raising the standard of living and hygiene.