

REVIEWS

"EPIDEMIOLOGY OF NON-COMMUNICABLE DISEASE"

Edited by E. D. Acheson

British Medical Bulletin, Vol. 27, 1, January 1971. Medical Department, British Council, London
Pp. 94. Price: £2.00

This book is in keeping with the high standards of epidemiology in the British schools of medicine. The introduction rightly draws attention to the modern definition of epidemiology as a "science that deals with the incidence, distribution and control of disease in a population", whether or not the disease in question is epidemic or communicable. Outstanding articles include "Validation of Screening Procedures" by A. L. Cochrane and W. W. Holland, "Cancer in Africa" by Paula J. Cook and D. P. Burkitt, and the "Epidemiology of Asbestos Cancers" by J. C. Wagner and his co-authors. It is very opportune for us in Singapore to read the last-mentioned article as more and more asbestos is being used or handled in our country. In an article on the influence of environmental influences on the development of intelligence, T. Mckeown and R.G. Record ably argue the interesting view that prenatal influences,

have little effect on measured intelligence. They observed that twins separated from their co-twin or soon after birth have intelligence scores which are little lower than those of single births, in spite of their retarded foetal growth, short duration of gestation and increased risks during birth.

The book obviously cannot replace the numerous excellent texts on epidemiology, but it contains a lot of useful and up-to-date information on many subjects of current interest. The doctor not specially trained in epidemiology may require careful perusal to follow some of the more technical arguments used, but it should be well worth his while to do so as, in the words of Prof. E. D. Acheson, the editor, "The role of epidemiological method in the study of present-day medical problems is seen to be pervasive indeed".

W. O. Phoon

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THE CARE OF BABIES AND YOUNG CHILDREN IN THE TROPICS

By David Morley, Senior Lecturer in Tropical Child Health
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This is a pamphlet published by the National Association for Maternal & Child Welfare. It is primarily meant for British families who are going overseas for the first time and residing in the tropics. However, because of its practical suggestions and recommendations, it is useful to those people who are residing locally in the tropical areas. Useful suggestions include the immunisation programme with differing requirements in different areas. Others include useful tips on clothing, bedding and infant feeding. The practical and

sound advice include breast-feeding and artificial feeding. In the latter it was pointed out that the brand of the milk is immaterial.

In view of this being primarily geared for British families, there is all the likelihood that it would enjoy only a limited circulation. Still it should be pointed out that one can learn something from the down-to-earth suggestions which often are taken for granted without much thought.

H. C. Teoh