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*Science News Letter, February 14, 1948*

**Science Service Radio**

► LISTEN in to a discussion on sounds from the sun on "Adventures in Science" over Columbia Broadcasting System at 3:15 p.m. EST Saturday, February 21. Grote Reber, radio physicist at the National Bureau of Standards, will be guest of Watson Davis, director of Science Service. Mr. Reber will tell you of the hissing and popping radio noises he has intercepted from the sun and stars.

*Science News Letter, February 14, 1948*

PHYSIOLOGY

**Sex Influences Malaria**

► SEX has something to do with the severity of malaria, at least in poultry. Two recent studies, one on chickens, the other on ducks, have closely parallel indications on this point.

The research on chickens, which was carried out by Drs. B. F. Bennison and G. Robert Coatney of the National Institute of Health, appears in *Science* (Feb. 6). They inoculated young chicks with the germs of a type of malaria peculiar to fowls. Subsequent examination of their blood showed that the female chicks were "taking it harder" than were the future roosters. The young females also got less benefit from treatment with quinine than did their brothers.

The experiments on ducks were carried out on adult birds by Dr. William Trager of the Rockefeller Institute for Medical Research. He found similar differences between females and drakes. This held, however, only when the ducks were not actively producing eggs. Egg-laying females were less affected than their inactive sisters.

This indication that the presence of the primary female sex hormone in the blood has a suppressive effect on the malaria germs is not borne out by one experiment performed by Drs. Bennison and Coatney. Their chicks, of course, were not producing the female sex hormone because they were immature. When this hormone was injected into them, it failed to affect the sex difference in severity of attack by the malaria parasites.

Whether these results on chicks and ducks have any significance in the several types of human malaria is still an unsettled question. Drs. Bennison and Coatney have checked over a large number of clinical records, and find no significant differences between men and women patients.

However, there is an opportunity to make a controlled test, because paretic patients are sometimes purposely given malaria infections to produce a fever that will benefit their worse malady. It is proposed to make a careful study of a considerable number of such therapeutic

malarias, in the hope of obtaining a more definite answer to this newest angle in the age-old riddle of the sexes.

*Science News Letter, February 14, 1948*

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