

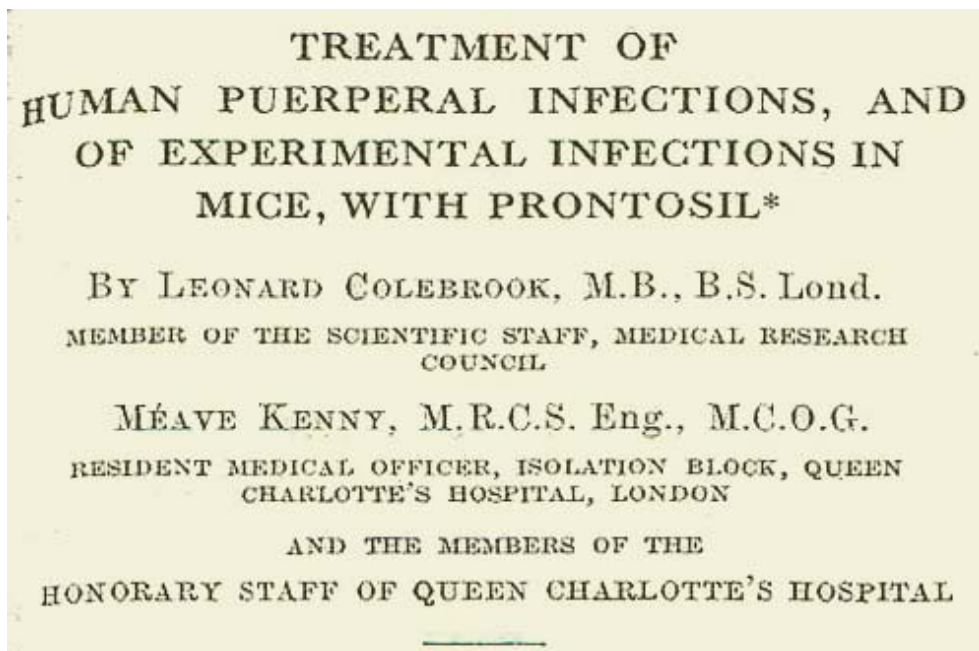
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[Key Passage\(s\)](#) [JLL Article\(s\)](#) [Context](#)

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Colebrook L, Kenny M (1936a). Treatment of human puerperal infections, and of experimental infections in mice, with prontosil. *Lancet* 1:1279-1286.

Key passages



MORTALITY-RATES OF TREATED AND UNTREATED CASES

There have been 3 deaths in the 38 cases treated by prontosil—that is 8 per cent. In considering the significance of this figure it has to be borne in mind that the first 10 cases were chosen because they were severe or moderately severe cases—the mildest being deliberately excluded; and, further, that the death-rate fluctuates to some extent according to whether few or many late cases—particularly late peritonitis cases—are admitted to the hospital. The following figures give an idea of the usual mortality-rate for *all cases* admitted to the isolation block and found to be infected by hæmolytic streptococci.

In the 38 cases admitted immediately prior to the use of prontosil (August to December, 1935) there were 10 deaths—i.e., 26·3 per cent. In the 38 cases immediately preceding these (March to July, 1935) there were 9 deaths—i.e., 23·7 per cent. During the four years 1931–34 the rate varied between 18 and 28·8 per cent. (average 22 per cent.).

While, therefore, there would appear to have been a very considerable reduction of the death-rate among the prontosil-treated cases it would be unwise to assume on the basis of so small a series that the reduction will be maintained. Nevertheless we are of the opinion that the very low death-rate, taken together with the spectacular remission of fever and symptoms observed in so many of the cases, does suggest that the drug has exerted a beneficial effect. It may be added that there is no reason to ascribe the clinical results to any other change in the local or general treatment of the cases.