

proved completely satisfactory for home and hospital use and are, in our opinion, much to be preferred for routine sedation and should completely supersede barbiturates for this purpose. The wide margin of safety of thalidomide in particular, as reported by De Souza¹ and Burley,² is a further recommendation of its use.—We are, etc.,

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REFERENCES

- ¹ De Souza, L. P., *Brit. med. J.*, 1959, 2, 635.
² Burley, D. M., *Med. Wld (London)*, 1960, 93, 26.

Paediatric Prescribing

SIR,—It was truly a delight to read Mr. R. C. Taylor's letter headed "Infants and the March of Medical Science" (August 20, p. 599). In a succinct manner larded with humour, he has pointed out that, even in so authoritative a work as the *National Formulary*, almost no attention is paid to the prescription of drugs for infants and children. I would go further and state that, even in most textbooks of paediatrics, the subject of drugs and dosage tends to be glossed over, the authors apparently being chary about committing themselves in this manner. As a result practitioners tend to limit the numbers of drugs they use and depend on some rule-of-thumb formula to arrive at a suitable dosage.

In order to fill what I thought was a serious gap in the paediatric literature, I felt compelled to collect together all the information available on drugs and dosage in paediatric practice. As the names of many drugs are better known in the form of "concoctions made by one of those unmentionable proprietary manufacturers" I have given these equal prominence with those which are sanctioned in the name of officialdom. The result is my book *The Paediatric Prescriber*,¹ which I hope will answer the anguished but unspoken prayer of practitioners such as Dr. Taylor.—I am, etc.,

Klerksdorp, South Africa.

PINCUS CATZEL.

REFERENCE

- ¹ Catzel, P., *The Paediatric Prescriber*, 1959. Blackwell Scientific Publications, Oxford.

POINTS FROM LETTERS

Awareness and Imagination

Mr. H. W. HECKSTALL-SMITH (Totnes, Devon) writes: Dr. S. L. Simpson (September 10, p. 806) asks if doctors may "too easily ignore patients' complaints as neurotic irrelevancies" and Dr. P. H. Addison points out just above how sad it is for surgeons to find they have operated on the wrong limb or digit. May a patient comment? The great thing seems to be that the patient as a person should make touch with the doctor as a person. It is just as disastrous for the patient to see the doctor as a mere curing-machine as it is for the doctor to see the patient as a mere case.

Sewage in the Sea

Dr. JAMES F. BRAILSFORD (Birmingham 15) writes: As special investigator to the late Sir John Robertson, medical officer of health to the City in 1910, I carried out a bacteriological examination of mussels sent into the City, and found typhoid bacilli in some. At this time I visited a popular seaside resort, where I found the human excreta so thick on the sands that it was impossible to walk without foully soiling my shoes. It looked as if the whole town had used the sands for squatting.

Obituary

M. DU BOIS FERGUSON, O.B.E., M.D., D.P.H.
Dr. M. du Bois Ferguson, formerly senior physician to the York County Hospital, died suddenly at Studland Bay, Dorset, at the age of 79.

Montgomery du Bois Ferguson was born on November 29, 1881, and was educated at Aldenham School and Trinity College, Dublin, graduating M.B., B.Ch. in 1905. He was resident student at Sir Patrick Dun's Hospital, Dublin, and external maternity assistant at the Rotunda Hospital, where he took the L.M. Later he was senior house-surgeon at the Borough Hospital, Bootle. After proceeding M.D. he took the D.P.H. of Dublin in 1907.

He came to York first to join the medical staff of Rowntree & Co. Ltd., then went into general practice, soon becoming assistant physician at the County Hospital, York. He did valuable service in the R.A.M.C. during the first world war, being mentioned in dispatches and appointed O.B.E. For some years before his retirement in 1939 he was the senior physician at the County Hospital. He was chairman of the York Division of the B.M.A. in 1933-4, and he was a past-president of the York Medical Society.

D. R. C. writes: The medical staff of the York County Hospital regretted that Dr. Ferguson retired comparatively early. He was an outstanding member, a man of the highest principles, with a very shrewd clinical sense. No one could be more transparently honest in deed or thought than he was, and no one could have given more help to colleagues: he was more concerned about their welfare than his own. After his retirement he was in poor health for a year or two, but to the joy of his family and friends he made an excellent recovery. His last two years were serene and contented, and his sudden end was deservedly without pain or suffering. Those of the hospital staff who worked with him will always think of him with respect and affection.

P. R. BOLUS, O.B.E., M.B.

Dr. P. R. Bolus, formerly Director of Medical Services, at the Ministry of Pensions, died in Victoria, British Columbia, on September 17. He was 80 years of age.

Percy Reginald Bolus was born on April 24, 1880, and was educated at Bancroft School and Guy's Hospital, to which he won a senior arts scholarship. Later he was awarded the Wooldridge Memorial prize, and when he graduated M.B. in 1903 he won a gold medal. After working as assistant demonstrator of histology at Guy's he held the posts of house-surgeon and registrar at the Seamen's Hospital, Greenwich. Later he was elected to the staff of the Royal Albert Hospital as assistant surgeon. Joining the Colonial Medical Service, he was posted to the Falkland Islands, where he met his wife. During the first world war he served as a major in the R.A.M.C.

In 1921 he joined the staff of the Ministry of Pensions, and the rest of his career was spent in the service of that Ministry.

J. P. T. M. writes: The passing of Dr. Percy Reginald Bolus at the age of 80 closes a loyal, active, and adventurous career, which in a man of less fortitude and resolution would have been marred by coronary disease. After five years with the Ministry of Pensions, in view of his clinical and administrative ability, he was drafted to Ottawa as the Ministry's medical representative for Canada. After an eminently successful tour of duty there of nine years he returned to London headquarters, and was appointed O.B.E. At the outbreak of the second world war he was evacuated with his department to Norcross, near Blackpool, with the rank of Director of Medical Services. There his penetrating, logical mind and clinical acumen were of the greatest value to the State and to disabled ex-Servicemen, his chief