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Sister if everything was not ready for him. I believe that his technique was like quicksilver; certainly many abdomens still bear the hallmark of his determination not to waste time with unnecessary suturing. He still had the gentle touch, however, and one desperate houseman struggling with a forceps delivery was reprimanded with, "That's human flesh you are assaulting, not a heifer!"

With the advent of the NHS he was forced to give up his surgical and obstetrical beds; and for this he blamed, and never



forgave, Robin Beveridge, Bruce Dewar, and James Laurie, those giants of the postwar hospital era in Dumfries. He once asked me my opinion of Laurie, then president of the Royal College of Physicians in Edinburgh. He cut short my reverent comment with a "Nonsenset You know as much as he does!"

He was tough and aggressive, and in some ways an arrogant and ruthless character. Either revered or resented, he was above all a positive personality. He appreciated people—and patients—who stood up to him but was quite ready to trample ower the many who were scared of him. When an unwary assistant would ask for a half-day, he would reply, "What do you think you are? A groce?" Or if alsack for time of for a game of golf: "You are here to practise the science of medicine; if you want to play golf, get up early—and leave the telephone number of the clubhouse."

play golf, get up early—and leave the telephone number of the clubbouse."

Sometimes I had to use a decrepti old Morris 12 of his, whose steering was suspect and always going to be sorted "tomorrow." Eventually it locked on me and I ran into a wall, only to be met with, "Why the hell iddn't you tell me about it before?" A new car died on him once in the middle of the night in the country and he got on to the garage owner, a personal friend, and demanded he come right out himself to sort it. Having got in mobile, the poor man was then forced in get into happened again." He enjoyed company on these late calls. "Going to Locharbriggs? Hop in, then, we'll go by Locharbead"—which is five miles in the opposite direction, and the poor passenger might be left stitting in the car while Gordon Hunter had one of his extended late-night consultations over a cup of tea and several eigenteet. Two of his required ronies were left sitting at the roadside deep in the country one dark night

when a shotgun was thrust through the window and a rough voice accused them of sheep stealing; they protested that they were just waiting for the doctor, but when eventually the doctor returned, with a twinkle in his oye that even the darkness could scarcely hide, be deried all bounds. "When coes Mrs Black stay?" he asked her. "Oh, is she poorly?" "That's none of your dann business" he nasped. "Then find your own dann way?" replied the woman. His treatment of his patients was summed up by a phrase he often used: "Do a I tell you and you'll be all right. Don't, and God help you!" Or on one occasion to a poor soul in hospital plending to be allowed home: "Certainly, go home now, if you want'; and, pointings to the cemetery up the common of the start o

last year."

His ex-batman's son goes through life saddled with all of Dr Hunter's names; his mother explained that after her confinement the doctor asked her what she was calling the baim. "Oh, Edward, I think," she said. "Edward be damned! You'll call him after me." He was an invertent semoker, and there were few things he would not do with a cigarette in his mouth. He me before you ston."

Flukes and football

When on holiday he was a different character, though still
very much in the driving seat. His favourite hobby was "tramping flukes," a form of bare-foot spearing of flounders in the Nith
estuary at Carlavevock—"the bonniers perish in the world."
He organised high-spirited parties to "twickenham and Trent
his shortened, war-wounded arm." A pity you didn't come to
me," he said; "I'd have made a better job of it, and then you
would have really been able to book!" Football was his main
local sporting interest, and if we could get the waiting-room
empty for a moment on Saturday afternoons, we would shut up
shop and dash off to see Queen of the South play; he was, of
course, the team's medical officer. Mr Hunter was also an ardent
upporter, and Queens were then a useful side. The worst thing
I did to Dr and Mrs Hunter was to laviet them to my wedding
and keep them from seeing Queens best Aberdeen 3-0 in a
cup tie.

To complete my picture of this striking man, I must emphasise the concern he showed for his patients. It was said that his

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This sense of frustration is also seen in family planning clinics where young girls, many with ability and skill, present with psychoomatic symptoms such as depression or headcabe. They try to attribute it to the pill when more often than not it is a result of their domestic or social environment. Symptomatic treatment rarely, if ever, cures anything. It may temporarily mask the symptoms but it soon becomes ineffective but not without producing habituation or even dependence. Unfor-

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unately the British National Formulary does not contain a pill to cure everything.

As I sit in my consulting room relatively cushioned against the inclement financial climate I often feel both inadequate and frustrated. It is the hope of better days around the corner that prevents me from transmitting my feelings to the patients. I only hope that they, too, feel that the tide will soon turn for the better.

Law and the General Practitioner

Legal aspects of violence in the family

D J PEREIRA GRAY

There are two main aspects of violence in the family: violence between adults and violence between adults and children. Violence between children is rare and usually implies that one or both of the children are in need of care and control. The legal aspects described in this article refer to England and Wales; the law in Soculant is different.

Violence between adults in the family

A physical assault by one adult on another is as much a criminal offence if it occurs between two members of a family as it is if it occurs between two strangers. Violence within families, however, has special features that may affect doctors who become involved. First doctors must consider the legal issues, then the attitudes of society, and family the complex relationships within the family

THE LAW
General practitioners and doctors in psychiatry and accident and
emergency departments are most likely to see cases of domestic
violence: in their everyday work, and they need to be aware of the
Domestic Violence and Matrimonial Proceedings Act (1976). The
Act allows a non or woman living together as man and wife, whether
one or more of the following provisions:
(1) Restraining the other party from molesting the applicant.
(2) Retraining the other party from molesting a child living with the
applicant.
(2) Requiring the other party from all open of the matrimonial bome.
(4) Requiring the other party to allow the applicant to enter and
remain in all or part of the matrimonial bome.

Where, on an application by a party to a marriage, a judge grants an
injunction containing a provision the may attach a power of arrest to
bodily harm to the applicant or to the child concerned and considers
that that person is likely to do it again.

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ATHTUDES OF SOCIETY

Newlands has shown how the three ancient laws, the English Common Law, Konnan Law, and the Napoleonic Code, have assumed that women were subordinate or subservient to men. In England and Wales women gained the vote only in 1928 and much of the legislation guaranteeing equality was passed only in the 1970s. British society, however, is now realigning its priorities and beginning to place a women whether married or not have been increased.

Women whether married or not have been increased.

Women shave been subjected to violence from men in their homes since time immenorial. What is now are the changing values in society that are increasingly being reflected in court decisions and professional practice.

under the Domestic Proceedings and Magairrates Court Act (1978), which came into operation in November 1979. They may issue a "personal protection order," which is narrower than the non-molestation order described above in that it pertains to actual or threatened physical wolence rather than petering or annoyance, but interested the process of the p

COMPLEX RELATIONSHIPS

In clinical practice doctors see more battered women than battered men. The problem for doctors is that although the law may be clear, the attrudes of society and the complex retinionally between the man and the woman may lead the woman to want to conceal the violence. The control of the control o

Violence between adults and children

Ill-treatment of a child is known as the "battered child syndrome," child abuse, or non-accidental injury. In English law anyone under the

working day was from 5.30 am to 5.30 am, and he lived for his work. After operating in Kirkcudbright he was once stranded by a bitzard; asto was his determination to get back for his Dumfries surgery, that he walked through the snow much of the way, leaving his assistant to bring the car later. In spite of his brusqueness his concern was for his patients; a caring man, and many is the poor household that has received a bag of coal of a winter's night, thanks to Dr Hunter. His great self-confidence and compelling manner inspired intense trust and faith, surely more

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potent therapeutic weapons in many conditions than the powerful pills unimaginatively peddled by some modern scientifically trained practitioners. I cannot claim to have attempted to model myself on him, but in remembering him I like to recall one of his sayings, when all had been done that could be done: "It is in higher hands now."

We will be pleased to consider for publication articles about other interest-ing general practitioners of the past.—ED, BMJ.

Unemployment in My Practice

Liverpool

MERVYN GOODMAN

The present high rate of unemployment undoubtedly has an effect on my work as a general practitioner but it is impossible to make an accurate quantitative or qualitative assessment of this increase. The area in which I practise, a housing estate built only 12 years ago and where the mid-rise flats are already scheduled for demolition, has always had a high level of unemployment in addition to many other social problems. Even so, the present economic recession has resulted in many noticeable changes.

so, the present economic recession has resulted in many mone-sible changes.

The requests for National Insurance Statements of Incapacity have dropped considerably. Many patients fear that absence through illness may icopardise their jobs, especially when there is any possibility of manpower reduction, while those who are unemployed now have no need for such statements. At the same time the many who are not in receipt of Social Security Benefit, and are therefore entitled to exemption from prescription charges, were certainly more demanding during the past winter.

Women

Many married women present with symptoms of anxiety depression resulting from economic factors. It is surprising in how many households it is the wife who is left to cope with the family financial problems. In these instances the doctor has family financial problems and in these instances the doctor has problems or alleviate the symptoms, and it is difficult to explain that a prescription for benzoliaseptines will not make the unpaid electricity or gas bill miraculously disappear. My answer to the lady who wants "Roche 5 like wort my neighbour's doctor gives 'er' often takes quite a lot of time and even then is frequently not well received. As well as not wanting to prescribe tranquillisers or antidepressants I am also worried about the black market value of such tablets as I have heard of them being sold in school playgrounds for somewhere around 50p a time.

School-leavers

I am particulatly sorry for the school-leavers. Most have seen one, or both, of their parents unemployed and the fact that a similar fate awaits them—at least in the forseeable future—is a daunting prospect. I am sure that, like me, they realise that it is far easier to close a factory when there is a depression than it is far easier to close a factory when there is a depression than it is many of their youngsten become variedles, more out of boredon than through malice. This antioocial behaviour unfortunately is all too often directed against those who are particulately vulnerable. We do not have many old people in the practice—less than 3%—but it is hearthreaking to listen to the stories these people tell of the fear and injury inflicted by the youths.

age of 18 is known as an "infant." It is simplest, however, to classify a "child" as someone under the age of 14 and a "young person" as removed the property of the second property of the pr

person:

(a) his proper development has been avoidably prevented or neglected, or his health is being avoidably impaired or neglected, or he

neglected, or his health is being avoidably impaired or neglected, or he being ill!treated;
(b) that it is probable that the conditions in paragraph (a) above will be satisfied having regard to the fact that a person who has been convicted of certain offences is or may become a member of the bounchold.

time education;
(j) he is guilty of an offence excluding homicide; and
(g) that the condition of paragraph (g) above having been satisfied,
it is probable that it would apply to some other child or young
person in the same household.
In addition the court must also be satisfied that he is in need of care or
control, which he is unlikely to receive unless the court makes an order.

CARE PROCEEDINGS

Care proceedings may be either voluntary or compulsory. Parents or paraditans of children who believe a child or young person is beyond their control may request the local authority to institute care proceedings. If the local authority relates or fails to do so within 28 days the parent or guardian may apply to the Juvenile Court for an order to the proceedings of the proceedings authority, or the National Society for the Prevention of Centely in stallings failure to attend school, and only the police of local authority may be initiated by the police, a local authority and leging failure to attend school, and only the police or local authority may bring proceedings alleging an offence. In addition compulsory are proceedings may be initiated by a court after matrimonial adinging failure to attend school, and only the police or local authority may bring proceedings and Magintrates Court Act, 1973), and in adoptions or custodinably proceedings children's Act, 1975.

The procedure for bringing care proceedings is governed by the magistrates courts (Children and Young Person); indee, 1970. The specifying the grounds and the names and addresses of the persons to be notified, the child (if old enough to understand), his parent/paurdian/foster parent, local authority, and, for an offence, the appropriate probation officer. The court must dedde whether or not collision of the child of 100 persons to be notified, the child (if old enough to understand), his parent/paurdian/foster parent, local authority, and, for an offence, the appropriate probation officer. The court must dedde whether or not collision of the child of 100 persons to the collision of the child of 100 persons and persons a person of the following Orders:

(a) An Order requiring the child or young person's parent of such authority author

(d) A Hospital or Guardianship Order under the Mental Health Act of 1959. In addition a court has power to make an interim care order which places the child in the care of the local authority for up to 28 days so that further investigations can be carried out. A decree of divorce cannot usually be made absolute, nor a decree of judicial separation granted until the court has given a certificate about the arrangement for children (S. 41, Mattrionnial Causes Act, 1973).

If it appears that a child is in immediate danger there is an emer-gency procedure that is available by an application to a single Justice of

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the Peace—if necessary to his or her home at night—who must be astafied that one of the conditions of the Children and Young Persons Act of 1990 is Midlled. This magniture may then gent as Order the co-called "Place of Safety" Order and enables a child to be taken immediately from his parents without explanation to the child or to them. In addition the police alone are empowered to remove a child to a place of safety for up to eight days without a court order.

Conclusions

The legislation described above refers mainly to physical illtreatment. General practitioners are equally concerned with
emotional problems, and emotional ill-treatment may cause
immense damage within the family. Physical violence in the
home has become intolerable. The rapidly changing legislation
offers more remedies to ill-treated wives and children and
reflects important changes in the attitudes of society. Parliament,
and the public to age-old problems. Women and children are
now properly considered as individuals in their own right with
equal rights before the law, and longstanding and ancient
traditions about their inferior position in society are progressively
being eliminated.

Newlands K. Women and the law. People 1980;7:3-4.

OF THE ASTHMA.

THE afthma is a difasfe of the lungs, which feldom admits of a cure. Perform in the decline of life are most liable to it. It is diffinguished into the most and express. The former is arrended with expectoration of plotting, but in the latter the patient feldom spins, unless fometimes a little tough phliggm by the mere force of coughns.

deldom first, unlefe formation to group, and the lander to patent deldom first, unlefe formation as little tough phlegm by the more force of coughing.

CAUSES.—The affirms is fometimes, hereditary. It may likewife proceed from a bad formation of the breal; the times of metals or minerals taken into the lungs; violent exercise, especially running; the oblitration of cultimary evacuations, as the mends, hemorrhoids, &c. the fadden retro-cellion of the gout, or fliking in of emptions, as the finall-pox, mealles, &c. violent patients of the mind, as fadden fear, or furpriic. In a word, the different patients of the mind, as fadden fear, or furpriic. In a word, the different patients of the mind, as fadden fear, or furpriic. In a word, the different patients of the patient is not provided by the air.

SYMPTOMS.—An afthma is known by a quick laborious breathing, which is generally performed with a kind of wheezing noide. Sometimes the difficulty of breathing is to great that the patient is obliged to keep in an erest poulture, otherwise his in danger of being fufficacted. A fit or paroxyfin of the afthma generally happens after a perfon has been expoded to cold cattlerly which, or has been abroad in thick foggy weather, or has got weet, or continued long in a Tate paroxyfin is commonly unfered in with lifelifiens, was not (leep), backing of wind, a fenic of heavines about the breatl, and difficulty of breathing. To these fusceed heavines, about the breatl, and difficulty of breathing. To these fusceed heaving palls, an involuntary flow of tears, bilious vomitings, &c. All the furgroups grow work to we for soon lair.

(Buchan's Domestic Medicine, 1786.)

(Buchan's Domestic Medicine, 1786.)

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