Joint Effort


The theme of these authoritative lectures by the director of the National Institute of Social Work Training is collaboration between doctors and social workers. The two professions are remarkably ignorant of each other. Even the busy doctor, one of whose main jobs is helping people to cope with situations—difficult children and ageing parents as well as chronic and disabling diseases—is ill-equipped to assess social situations and lamentably ignorant of available social services and how to mobilize them. He has little contact with social workers and is apt to dismiss them as hard to get hold of and undesirable. Social workers, on the other hand, are touchy about medical undervaluation of their professional skills and resentful of traditional specialist attitudes to them, apparently unaware that modern group practice has abandoned the hierarchical administrative structure of hospitals (the very term "senior partner" is now an anachronism). In all the too few experiments in which social workers have actually worked in group practices each profession quickly resented the contributions of the other to patient care and they work as a team.

The author foresees a new philosophy of social work emerging from the local authority departments of social services: a community based, family oriented personal social service readily available to everybody—a social service equivalent of the National Health Service. If this happens (and his diagnosis of the present situation is so sound that I for one am prepared to trust his prognosis) doctors and social workers will "share" their patient clients rather than one "refer" them to the other, and social workers will become part-time members of group practices without detaching themselves from their own professional base. Team work will need to be worked for, not only by teaching students that the medical needs of society demand other skills than their own, but, the author suggests, by creating a centre for inter-professional studies to include medical planning and management, economics, education as well as medicine, nursing, and social work, to study partnership between and within professions.

The book is short, free from esoteric jargon, and convincing. I recommend it to every family doctor and most clinicians.

ANDREW SMITH

Problems of Man's Biology


"This unusual book approaches genetics from the standpoint of various systems, making it the most inclusive, comprehensive source of information available on those genetic disorders that concern internal medicine"—so begin the notes on the dust cover; and on reading the contributions by the 21 authors one has to agree that most of the subjects dealt with are done so comprehensively. However, the question that immediately presents itself when reviewing a book of this kind is, why produce a 1,000 page—£16—comprehensive book, when there already exists an excellent catalogue of Mendelian Inheritance in Man giving references that can be extracted from most medical libraries? The answer to the question is read Genetic Disorders of Man and see.

Professor Goodman with his team of 20 contributors has succeeded in producing a book of lasting value. The genetic principles presented in the first four chapters are repeatedly reinforced and beautifully decorated by the many hundreds of disorders discussed in the subsequent chapters. The illuminating effect of genetic studies on all branches of internal medicine is another theme that runs throughout the text and helps to give it a cohesion that is rarely achieved in a book of many authors.

The first section has chapters on molecular genetics, cytogenetics, and the family pedigree and genetic counselling; all concisely written and providing a successful introduction to the subject and the current problems. It is tempting when introducing mathematical genetics to the novice to restrict comments to simple mendelian ratios and the Hardy Weinberg law, thereby ignoring the really challenging area of quantitative genetics—namely, the analysis of the contributions of many gene loci and environment to phenotypes presenting with continuous distributions. The chapter "Numerical Considerations in Genetics", does not make this error, and provides a well balanced, though necessarily scanty, account of the subject. The second section of the book deals, system by system, with those genetic disorders that concern the clinician. Each chapter begins with an outline of the contents and an introduction explaining the author's view of the role of genetics in his own specialty. In describing a disorder emphasis is placed on discussing the genetics and the basic defect in pathophysiology, where this is known. Good use of tables allows information to be packed in and the text to remain readable. Illustrations are restricted to small line diagrams and metabolic pathways where appropriate. Comprehensive references are given for each chapter and there is also a rather limited glossary of genetic terms.

The chapter on haemoglobinopathies and thalassaemia is used to good advantage to illustrate the principles of molecular genetics and that on neoplastic disease to illustrate aspects of cytogenetics and cell kinetics. Several chapters give a good introduction to the basic physiology, but a little more embodiment would have been desirable. Discussion of pharmacogenetics was scattered and generally inadequate, particularly the account of the pseudocholinesterases.

This is a fine book, which will become one of the accepted texts on the subject. I hope people do not treat it just as a reference book, for they will find the author's message "that we have indeed entered into the 'golden age' of understanding the biology of man."

MARCUS E. PEMBREY

Two Life-times of Practice


Dr. Trevor Hughes, doyen of the general practitioners of the Vale of Cheyl and a former president of the North Wales branch of the B.M.A., succeeded his father the late Dr. Medwyn Hughes and has now written his observations of their combined 80 years in the practice. In 35 chapters of anecdotal, aphoristic, and down to earth commentary on life in general in North Wales and on the changes which have occurred in the time—not all of them for the better—the author shows his interest in his patients, their animals, and their surroundings.

In these days when the busy practitioner is his own driver and has to devote all his attention between calls to traffic and parking problems it is fascinating to dwell on the time when the doctor could give all his thoughts to problems of medicine, surgery or, most often, obstetrics, while his "man" harnessed and fetched the horse and trap and drove the vehicle to the patient's house. The author pays well merited tribute to his hero, the late Hugh Morriston Davies.

GEORGE R. MCBRIDE

SELECTED NEW TITLES


Preservation of Personal Health in Warm-Climates. 7th edn. (Pp. 103; 35p.) The Ross Institute, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine. 1971.
cancer research is likely to be just as successful as the only two previous projects achieving similar support—the atomic bomb and the moon landing. Active participation by all Western European governments, both in terms of money and manpower, would be needed if Europe were to compete vigorously. If European countries failed to join the programme warned Professor van Bekum they might not even be able to take advantage of American research.

"You" Magazine

A joint statement issued by the B.M.A. and TPL Magazines Ltd. on 2 July stated that they "announced with regret that the publication of You magazine would be discontinued after the September issue. The reason for this decision lay in the continuing adverse economic climate, and the effect this had on the publishing industry. This had not enabled You to reach a satisfactory level of circulation and advertisement revenue."

Help for India

A team sponsored by the Rotary Club of Risca, North Wales, and backed by doctors, teachers, and farmers, will start digging wells in India later this year. Any volunteers for future expeditions or those willing to give money should contact their local Rotary Club.

British Association of Urological Surgeons

The following officers have been elected for 1971-2: president, Mr. J. D. Ferguson; immediate past president, Mr. A. W. Badenoch; vice-president, Mr. H. G. Hanley; honorary treasurer, Mr. I. H. Griffiths; honorary secretary, Mr. C. H. Kinder.

Reports Received

Your Skin and the Body Beautiful, by Dr. P. J. Hare, a Family Doctor booklet, published by the British Medical Association, price 10p.

People in the News

Professor Ranjit Roy Chaudhury, of the Postgraduate Institute of Medical Education and Research, Chandigarh, and Dr. Sachinmohan Mukerjee, director of the Cholera Research Centre, Calcutta, 1968-70, are the winners of the Shri Amrit Mody Research Foundation 1970 awards "in medicine and its special branches" and "in pharmacy and pharmaceutics" respectively.

Mr. J. McK. Wellwood, surgical registrar, St. Thomas's Hospital, London, has been awarded the Queen's commendation for brave conduct, "for services when a man was trapped under concrete during the demolition of factory premises."

Mr. L. T. Morton, librarian of the National Institute for Medical Research, has been awarded the Barnard memorial prize for his contribution to medical librarianship.

COMING EVENTS

International Conference on Wildlife Disease—18-22 July, Sussex University. Details from Dr. A. McDairmid, Institute for Research on Animal Diseases, Compton, near Newbury, Berks.

3rd British Academic Conference in Otolaryngology.—18-23 July, Edinburgh. Details from Mr. J. C. Ballantyne, 61 Harley Street, London W1N 1DD.

Endocrinology 1971.—Third international symposium, 19-22 July, London. Details from Dr. G. V. Foster, Royal Postgraduate Medical School, Ducane Road, London W.12.

1st International Symposium on Intracranial Pressure.—27-29 July 1972, Hanover. Details from Dr. M. Brock, Neurochirurgische Klinik, Medizinische Hochschule Hannover, 3 Hannover-Kleefeld, Roderbruchstrasse 101, West Germany.

"Reorganization of the N.H.S.—"One-day conference, 29 July, Central Hall, Westminster. Details from the Royal Society of Health, 90 Buckingham Palace Road, London S.W.1 (Tel. 01-730 5134-6, extn. 15.)

Institute of Medical Laboratory Technology.—13th Triennial conference, 31 July-7 August, Aberdeen. Details from Mr. A. D. Farr, Regional Transfusion Centre, Royal Infirmary, Forsterhill, Aberdeen AB9 2 ZW. (Tel. 0224-23423, extn. 2564.)

Association of Police Surgeons of Great Britain.—Autumn symposium, 3-4 September, Lancashire University. Early application is advised (before 31 July), and details are obtainable from the organizer, Dr. W. H. Thomas, St. Fillans, 2 Liverpool Road, Penwortham, Preston, Lancs. (Tel. Preston 43178.)

British Orthopaedic Research Society.—Meet- ing, 13 October, St. James's Hospital, Leeds. Papers are invited, by 31 July, for those engaged in research in orthopaedics and its related disciplines. Details from Dr. R. Wynne-Davies, department of orthopaedic surgery, Edinburgh University, 12 George Square, Edinburgh EH8 9IZ. (Tel. 031-667 1011, extn. 2433.)

SOCIETIES AND LECTURES

For attending lectures marked * a fee is charged or a ticket is required. Applications should be made first to the institution concerned.

Tuesday, 13 July

INSTITUTE OF NEUROLOGY.—5.30 p.m., Professor D. R. Curtis (Gambetta): Pharmacology of Central Inhibitors.

ST. ANNE'S GENERAL HOSPITAL, LONDON.—1 p.m., videorigraph presentation: How to Record an Electroencephalograph.

WESTMINSTER MEDICAL SCHOOL.—5.15 p.m., Dr. O. Bishus (Mayo Clinic): surgical staff round.

Wednesday, 14 July

ROYAL FREE HOSPITAL.—5.15 p.m., Dr. L. Siltz- ing, U.S.A. (Sarcoidosis).

ROYAL POSTGRADUATE MEDICAL SCHOOL.—2 p.m., Professor R. R. Arrowsmith, Department of Medicine at the Hospital of Pseudomonas aeruginosa and Escherichia coli.

Thursday, 15 July

ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS OF ENGLAND.—5 p.m., Hunterian lecture by Professor C. J. Magarey: Control of Cancer Spread by Reticuloendothelial System.

Friday, 16 July

ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS OF ENGLAND.—3 p.m., Charles Tomes lecture by Professor K. P. Fiddelow: Aspects of Relationship between Function and Form in Prosthetic Dentistry.

ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS IN IRELAND


Notice to Authors

When original articles and letters for publication are not submitted directly to the British Medical Journal this must be stated. Correspondence on editorial business should be addressed to the Editor, British Medical Journal, B.M.A. House, Tavistock Square, London WC1H 9JR. Telephone: 01-397 4499. Telegrams: Aitiology, London, W.C.1.

Authors wanting reprints of their articles should notify the Publishing Manager, B.M.A. House, Tavistock Square, WC1H 9JR, on receipt of proofs.