

parison between high grade administration of the hospital and public health sectors and the absence of any administration directed towards producing high grade general practice is clear and disturbing; discussing needed improvements, defined in the Gillie Report (1963), the authors comment:

The question is how far all these improvements can be brought about without introducing more organization into general practice, and how would such a suggestion be received by the doctors.

Present pressures on providing quality care, exerted by the community, will cause all of us to rethink our traditional roles and patterns of work to enable oncoming demand to be matched to our available resources; and need, as yet undetermined or unexpressed, is an added force to bring organization and administration of general practice into line with that of other parts of the health services.

The clear type and good quality paper aid considerably in appreciating the logic presented by Dr Peters and his collaborators. This book will not only be a source book in wide demand by those taking the postgraduate course but will be of equal value to all engaged in rethinking the future role and future effectiveness of general practice as an integral part of medical care.

The Family and Individual Development. D. W. WINNICOTT, F.R.C.P.
London. Tavistock Publications. 1965. Pp. viii+181. Price 30s.

It is a testimony to the influence of Dr Winnicott's publications over the years that this should offer what many of us search for as reading background to our work as general practitioners. The book is a compilation of papers addressed to social and professional workers and aims at a wide reading public. This is an advantage especially for those of us who were young in the era when psychiatry and paediatrics were very wide apart.

The first and larger part is concerned with the sequence of changes in the relationship of the child to his family and essentially to his parents. The author begins with total dependence of a newborn infant on his mother, who herself is more dependent upon others immediately after childbirth than at any other phase of her adult life. His description of the natural alteration from this total dependence of the child through the early months is a beautiful piece of writing. The infant's "innate tendency towards development" conflicts with his desire for absolute safety and control of the means, always in the framework of his mother's gradual separation from him in her "wish to free herself from the bondage of motherhood", yet within the atmosphere of parental and reciprocated love. Dr Winnicott emphasizes that the delicacy of gradual change in the relationship in early life can be left to the infant, the mother, and the father under normal circumstances; that interference is rarely needed, and can be dangerous without knowledge of the bonds involved.

The development of this theme from the mother-infant coupling through the gradual integration of the child's growth as an independent character

appreciating reality in his world of fantasy on and out to society beyond the familiar one is now well known. It is presented freshly and leads on to a second theme. These same chapters are concerned with the emotional malaise that is the expression of vulnerable phases in the normal child's growth. Even in a satisfactory family environment circumstances can arise to disturb the child's adjustment to changes that are necessarily painful, for the process is delicate and ever changing. The vulnerability of an immature person to major crises in family life, especially when a psychotic element intrudes, either through himself or some other part of his background, is expanded with emphasis that drastic interference may be repeated to avoid immediate danger. The author sees the urgent need for psychiatric training in those who must act therapeutically under such circumstances.

He writes more briefly about the ways by which complete maturity shows in the difficulties of being an adolescent. He suggests that three recent changes add to this difficulty. Venereal disease is no longer a bogey, the development of contraceptive techniques has given the adolescent freedom to explore even when these are ignored, and the existence of the atom bomb has changed the whole outlook concerned with social discipline and obligation. He adds to this that "It is a prime characteristic of adolescents that they do not accept false solutions".

Dr Winnicott uses the adolescent explosiveness as an example of the essential naturalness of apparently abnormal reactions, anxieties, and misbehaviour of a growing creature at various stages. The child showing transient and even severe symptoms at certain ages is more normal than the invariably placid infant, the biddable four year old or the meek and tidy adolescent. Society has evolved ways of controlling the sharpness of the reactions which burst through at times. He asserts the concept of "maturity as health Mature adults bring vitality to that which is ancient, old and orthodox by recreating it after destroying it."

The second part of the book contains half a dozen articles on more separate themes; of particular interest to this reader are "The contribution of psycho-analysis to midwifery" and more generally "Some thoughts on the meaning of democracy".

There is very much in Part 1 concerning our own range of work among families. It can bring us to review many of our conclusions, and force us to rethink our own attitudes to family problems presented to us. Our approach to others may be, must be, coloured by our own family issues and our reactions as parents to our own children, and long ago as children to our own parents.

This is a stimulating book.

Electrocardiograms. A Systematic Method of Reading Them. M. L. ARMSTRONG, M.B., B.S. Bristol. John Wright & Sons Ltd. 1965. Pp. vii + 64. Price 17s. 6d.

The object of this book is "to set out a method whereby anyone starting with a minimum of basic knowledge may be able to pick up an electrocardiographic tracing and by a local step-by-step process arrive at the