

CONTINUING EDUCATION

Individual clinical attachments

It is increasingly recognized that many general practitioners want to refresh their knowledge and ability by means of practical experience rather than theoretical instruction. To meet this demand the British Postgraduate Medical Federation has arranged individual attachments at various hospitals and centres. The greatest demand is for obstetrics, but attachments can be arranged in most subjects.

Some of these attachment schemes have attracted much more publicity than others and general practitioners may not be aware of the number of centres offering such facilities or of the variety of subjects. Clinical attachments arranged by the Federation are officially approved instruction and qualify for the postgraduate grant in the same way as formal courses.

Applications should be made to the Postgraduate Medical Federation, 18 Guilford Street, London, W.C.1.

Reviews of Recordings

Chemotherapy of cancer. Recording by MR IVAN JOHNSTON. The College Medical Recording Service and Sound Library.

The gist of this recording is that no one has yet found a cytotoxic drug with a selective action on cancer cells. The possibility of ultimate success is argued with clarity of thought and diction, to which it is a pleasure to listen.

After describing early work with alkylating agents, antimetabolites, and alkaloids, Mr Johnston recounts their further development in the search for agents less toxic to healthy tissue. As the most important damage is to the haemopoietic system, attempts have been made to preserve bone marrow by removing and storing part of it before treatment and replacing it afterwards.

The pros and cons of regional arterial perfusion, limiting the toxic drug to a small area are discussed, but the search for a quick-acting and quickly destroyed drug has so far been fruitless. Mr Johnston finds that many tumours of the head and neck are controlled and made to regress by slow perfusion of perhaps 500 mg. of methotrexate over a period of 10 days.

The final place of chemotherapy in the treatment of cancer may be as an adjuvant to radiotherapy or surgery.

Seven 35 mm. slides accompany the tape to illustrate various points. The tape runs for about 45 minutes.