

Paediatric education. Report on a WHO conference, Berg-en-Dal, Netherlands. Copenhagen. WHO. 1965. Pp. 56. Free.

Teachers of paediatrics from 28 European countries—Dr Hugh Jolly represented the United Kingdom—met in Holland to discuss the present and future of teaching in child health: they were assisted by WHO officials, by various special observers, and by some ‘temporary advisers’, among them Dr John Ellis of the Ministry of Health. Previous study, it was said, had shown “that paediatric education in many countries is not yet producing general practitioners and paediatricians trained and prepared to integrate fully in daily practice the curative and preventive aspects of their work”; the aim of the conference was to formulate steps “to develop a sturdy and progressive paediatric educational system”.

The conference’s first task was to define its terms of reference—for even the term paediatrician can have different meanings in different countries. It went on to consider the present position of paediatrics and paediatric education, and then passed to its most important task, consideration of the future. This was not carried out with any narrow paediatric bias, and the most interesting section in the whole report, at least to the general reader, is the chapter on the future development of medical education.

This is considered on the now generally accepted basis of four stages of education—undergraduate, general vocational, special vocational, and continuing. The second stage, the conference believed, should have an optimum duration of two years, and should be spent mainly in medicine, surgery, obstetrics and paediatrics. A majority view was expressed in favour of “a further period of specialized training . . . even (or perhaps especially) in the case of general practice”. Later, in its more detailed discussion of training methods, a plea is made that “consideration should be given to organizing training posts in which a part of the work is outside the hospital”.

It was interesting, after reading this report, to examine once again the College’s recommendations on vocational training for general practice. Clearly, any implementation of the College’s ideas will require goodwill and help from specialist colleagues, not least the paediatricians. The general agreement between the two reports makes one optimistic that when the time comes—and it may indeed be very near—for such implementation, then there should be little difficulty in achieving sympathetic co-operation from colleagues in the field of child health.

Counseling in marital and sexual problems. Edited by RICHARD H. KLEINER, Ph.D. Edinburgh and London. E. & S. Livingstone Ltd. Baltimore. Williams and Wilkins Company. 1965. Pp. x+309. Price 78s.

In spite of minor obstructions presented by a different national background and legal code this book can be of great interest and practical usefulness to readers in this country. The subtitle is ‘A Physician’s Handbook’, physician in this context being synonymous with our own family doctor. It gives impressive evidence of the attention recently

focused on marriage difficulties by a variety of academic departments. Human understanding (unclouded by sentimentality) seems to be more evident among those authors without the qualification M.D.

Dr Kleiner, Ph.D., the editor and contributor of several chapters, has the gift of writing direct and readable prose. As a practising psychologist he distinguishes at the outset between marriage counselling and individual psychotherapy, in objective, in urgency and in technique. His three opening chapters would be of value to many of us if published over here as a booklet: What has happened to Marriage sets out new sociological concepts common to all nations in our western tradition and culture. (Though how does Canada achieve only one-fifth, relatively, of the divorces in the U.S.A.? The influence of the Roman Catholic population is not so large as that would suggest.) His Marriage Counseling Techniques is equally valuable to readers here.

It is noteworthy that most of the chapters written by medical authors lose from undue technical phraseology and tables of classification and method: perhaps this is unavoidable.

Raymond Fowler, Ph.D., writes on Alcoholics and their Families with professional authority, but in a way both supporting and stimulating to a family doctor. Eleanor Hamilton, Ph.D., is responsible for an outstandingly valuable chapter on Encouraging Sexual Communication, a subject for which Anglo-Saxons in both countries seem to be ill-equipped constitutionally. It is a delight to read.

Charles Vincent, again a Ph.D., is responsible for writing on extramarital pregnancies and is a psychologist member of a department of obstetrics and gynaecology at Winston-Salem. His discussion of emotional reactions, especially the attitudes of the boy-friend is fresh and provocative to us over here. John Crist, Ph.D., is equally stimulating on The Dominant Partner, one of the best chapters in the book.

Among the doctors of medicine, Mary Calderone, director of the Sex Information and Education Council of the United States, writes briefly and effectively on family planning. J. L. Hampson, M.D., is less useful on Sexual Deviations by a surfeit of technicalities. W. H. Masters, M.D., with Miss Johnson (no degree) both from the Reproductive Biology Research Foundation at St Louis produce a wise chapter on Counseling with Incompatible Marriage Partners. Later in the book the editor contributes a chapter on Counseling with Widowed, Divorced and Unmarried Women, admirable in its understanding of the *femme seule's* special problems. Other authors on parent-child problems, the climacteric, infertility, the law and so on contribute to new attitudes. Ethel Nash, M.A., from the Department of Preventive Medicine and Genetics, Winston-Salem, sets out the need for training of men and women in the whole subject.

The index is too brief for a book of reference so rich in material. The bibliographies following each chapter for counsellors and counselled are extensive, containing a few titles by British authors, somewhat disguised by American publishers; this is of course reasonable for the readership aimed at.

We could do well in this country with a 'translation' into a volume with contributions of our own, and the change of detail required to fit our own sociological background. Reading and rereading some of the

chapters emphasizes our need to start rethinking about marriage and its essential aims for both parents and children in our life today. Several of the authors present the challenge to the family doctor whose patients apply for help with their marriages, often indirectly. The doctor's choice to counsel himself or to refer elsewhere is often baffled by the difficulty of who is to be found locally that he can in all conscience refer to. This book helps as well as provoking us.

Handbook on oral contraception. Edited by ELEANOR MEARS, M.B., Ch.B.
International Planned Parenthood Federation. London. J. and A.
Churchill Ltd. 1965. Pp. xiii+107. Price 20s.

This concise handbook gives excellent coverage to a subject of vital and growing importance to all general practitioners, whether they prescribe the pill themselves or not. Unfortunately it is a cold scientific study with too many references and too few conclusions. The clinical aspects, which would be the general practitioner's main concern, are dismissed in a brief 30 pages. The chapter on Practical Issues for Doctors Prescribing Oral Contraceptives offers great hope, but it is written in an irritating question and answer form without subtitles, and makes poor showing against the well designed and informative booklets on the same subject issued by pharmaceutical firms. There are some questionable statements such as 'Although disturbing to patients in the early days of oral contraceptives nausea is certainly less common *now that the pills have come to be more widely accepted* and the dose of oestrogens reduced. (My italics). Nor would everyone agree with the statement in author's italics that because of side-effects 'It is not a good idea to keep changing from one product to another'. The seventeen microphotographs are extremely good and well produced.

Medical disorders in obstetric practice. C. G. BARNES, M.D., F.R.C.P.
Second edition. Oxford. Blackwell Scientific Publications Ltd.
1965. Pp. ix + 434. Price 50s.

Publication of a second edition only three years after the first is an indication of the good value of this book which deals with the disorders about which an obstetrician might be expected to consult a general physician. In this edition there are three new chapters dealing with Psychiatric Disorders in Pregnancy, Venereal Diseases, and Drugs and the Expectant Mother. Like the first edition, reviewed in this *Journal* in 1962, the second is well and clearly written and is quite suitable for reading by the general practitioner as well as the registrar for whom it is primarily intended. There is a good index and each chapter except that on psychiatric disorders ends with a comprehensive list of references.