

WORKING PARTIES

A VERY GOOD friend, the editor of *The Practitioner*, has taken us gently to task for having too many committees and working parties concerned with education. We agree that one of the easiest ways of avoiding making a decision is to refer the matter to a committee which in turn, if it is unable to arrive rapidly at a reasonable decision, is tempted to form a working party. Nevertheless, at this time medical education is expanding so fast and so many new ideas and techniques are being evolved that it is almost inevitable for these problems to be studied in the less formal conversational atmosphere of working parties. The danger is that these will continue talking for so long that by the time they report, the matter they were discussing will have been left behind in the race and squeezed out by other business. Working parties can be of use in that they can enlist the services of many able and informed people to help them, and the ephemeral nature of the working party permits of great flexibility. Working parties can master the intricacies of difficult subjects with far greater speed than can a large committee. Working parties can also produce far more readable reports than can a larger body of men. Nevertheless it behoves the Council of the College to watch carefully over the number of offshoots it forms. Working parties must report the progress of their deliberations regularly to the parent committee.

REFERENCE

Practitioner, 1966, 197, 735.

ORAL CONTRACEPTIVE STUDY

LAST JULY an outline was given¹ of the College's controlled study of the health of women taking the Pill. A very small trial run of the record card and organization required has just been completed; the Records and Statistical Unit is now ready to go forward to a larger trial leading up to the main study itself. At this stage the precise design and costing of administration cannot be completed until some estimate has been made of the number of doctors in the College likely to be willing to take part in this inquiry. The Epidemic Observation Unit has taken on the task of finding doctors.

Every member and associate in the United Kingdom is therefore asked to complete and return notification form No. 43 at the back