

Second conference on the use of audio tape in medical education. Edited by JOHN and VALERIE GRAVES.

Thanks to Drs John and Valerie Graves and the Medical Recording Service, The Royal College of General Practitioners has been a pioneer of the use of tape for teaching. On the tenth anniversary of the Medical Recording Service the second conference on the use of tape in medical teaching was held at Chelmsford. It was attended by men and women from many of the health professions, most of them actively engaged in either producing tapes for teaching or in using them. Sir Edward Wayne was in the chair.

The conference was divided into three sessions:
 How tape is being used now;
 Can we improve and extend the use of tape?
 How can we assess the effectiveness of tape?

One of the advantages of tape is demonstrated by this publication itself. The discussion after the papers was recorded and is given in detail; I found this part of the conference even more interesting than the papers themselves. A conference attended by such strong personalities could not fail to produce such a good discussion.

It is a pity that the chairman marred his summing up by repeating some old clichés about general practice. Do people still really believe that general practitioners are from the bottom of the barrel and consultants from the top? and why shouldn't general practitioners learn how to read electrocardiographs? Are they not supposed to be clinicians?

Diseases of children. Second edition. HUGH JOLLY, M.A., M.D., F.R.C.P., D.C.H. Oxford and Edinburgh. Blackwell Scientific Publications. 1968. Pp. xii + 752. Price 63s.

This is a textbook in the traditional manner, deriving more from Boyd and Conybeare than from Price and Osler. Dr Jolly has a plain unvarnished tale to tell, and does it in a style that is economical and lucid—his wide and varied experience is constantly apparent, and there is much evidence of an incisive shrewdness learnt, no doubt, in this hard school.

This new edition includes sections on cot death and the battered baby syndrome, as well as school phobia and truancy, but it is rather depressing to find that the causes of the first are as shrouded in mystery as ever. Due weight is given to the common diseases of childhood, and the chapters on normal development and neonatal disease are especially valuable—the photographs are quite splendid.

It is interesting to note once again the difference in thought and experience between consultant and general practitioner. How many generalists would agree that acute appendicitis is 'an extremely common condition' of children? How many that a six-day course of oestrogens is sufficient for the suppression of lactation? On the domiciliary management of childhood diseases, too, his counsels are those of perfection, and would bring a wry smile to the face of many hard-pressed general practitioners. Yet it is fitting—in a textbook designed to be read by students—that high ideals, however unattainable, should be set as targets.

This is an elegant book, beautifully set up and illustrated, well indexed and cross-referenced, and excellent value for money. It certainly merits a place in the library of the family doctor, and its down-to-earth realism and commonsense must come as a breath of fresh air to the senior student crammed, perhaps, with distressful didacticism. Works of this calibre are few and far between, and it is