

own instruments and to remain a general practitioner. He welcomed the prospect of a community hospital.

DR W. G. TAIT (*Reading*) as the Thames Valley Faculty's representative on the Royal College Council, spoke on the faculty's outlook in the immediate future. He thought that their main objective should be to stimulate others and to work for an improvement all round in general practice. He anticipated that in 1971 the first vocational register for general practice would be established; three years later the first fully-trained community physicians would arrive.

The opportunities which were offered to the faculty now were:

1. The Todd Report; its implementation.
2. Drs Oddie and Rue to co-operate with them in their objectives and plans.
3. Co-operation with Dr Arthur Williams as in the past, in the field of postgraduate education.

He listed the key problems before the faculty as:

1. To get the undergraduate interested in general practice as early as possible, so that he might become aware of the very stimulating work to be found there.
2. A register of teaching practices would have to be formed and work on this had already started.
3. The establishment of vocational training for general practitioners. This required both the planning of courses and the designation of practices for this purpose.

DR J. W. TODD (*consultant physician, Farnham*) gave the final paper in the symposium. In this he made some comments on the use we made of our resources. The use of hospital beds he described as poor. He criticized the too early admission of patients for cold surgery, and failed to see any justification for the existence of a waiting list for acute medical beds. There were few exceptions to the rule, in his view, that if a patient was able to walk into a hospital medical ward he did not need a bed. Most investigations should be carried out as outpatients and he saw no reason why patients should be admitted to hospital for stabilizing diabetes. There were some patients who simply must be in the hospital, and he instanced the aged, living alone, and doubly incontinent after a stroke. Admission for such should be immediate and without question. He criticized the over-investigation of some patients whose symptoms were vague. The results were often disastrous and the costs enormous. It was most important to look at people as a whole and to take a general rather than a local view. He considered that the routine medical examination was a waste of time.

Medical care in the 'seventies

THE S.W. ENGLAND FACULTY of the College held a symposium in the new Torbay Medical Centre Torquay on 3 May 1969. Some 60 doctors were treated to three excellent addresses on the effects which the recommendations of the Royal Commission on Medical Education were likely to have on medical care.

DR D. MATTINGLY, director of the Medical Postgraduate Institute of the University of Exeter, gave a vivid and critical account of the difficulties which beset the implementation of the Royal Commission's report. He pointed out that if 1,000 doctors per annum were to be trained in the manner suggested, no less than 3,000 training posts would be required in hospitals for this purpose alone; and if foreign doctors were also to be trained at least a further 1,000 posts would be required, making 4,000 in all.

DR ALEXANDER MACARA, lecturer in public health at the University of Bristol, gave a brilliant account of the public health attitude to developments in medicine and spoke of the possibilities of the public health service and its evolution.

DR W. O. WILLIAMS, general practitioner of Swansea, gave the meeting his own version of the way in which the Royal Commission's findings might influence the future.

After tea there was a lively discussion. One or two non-members of the College who had been attending the university's official course of which the symposium was an approved part, brought an interesting challenge into the proceedings by questioning the value and function of the Royal College. This gave an opportunity for members to state and re-assess the College's position.

The symposium was chaired by the Faculty Provost, Dr Eric Townsend.