

BOOK REVIEWS

Clinical gynaecology (1972). WALLACE BARR.
Pp. 261. Edinburgh and London: Churchill
Livingstone. Price: £3.00.

This well produced book is designed largely for undergraduates and general practitioners. The style is easy with some sense of humour and there are many good illustrations, some in colour, and a number of useful diagrams. In his foreword, Professor Ian Donald refers to the old maxim 'lump—cut, no lump—no cut', and this is again mentioned in the text, but the reader will soon discover that this book is not merely about lumps and abnormal bleeding but is also about individual patients, with their many, varied, personal problems.

Though at times the lists of conditions, complications and the like can look formidable yet the exposition is clear and readable. As in other fields of medicine, there have been great advances recently in gynaecology and there are good sections on these, including hormones, laparoscopy and, as is to be expected from the Glasgow School, sonar. Many will find sonograms interesting, though the interpretation is not easy, despite instructions. The chapter on control of conception is particularly helpful, not only to beginners but to those who have been in practice for a number of years and may feel somewhat out of depth with the modern trends of family planning, though on page 183, there is a slip in the dosage of mestranol.

Other problems, of infertility, coitus and the like, are helpfully approached and there is a short bibliography for those who wish to pursue these matters in greater depth. Similarly descriptions of operations, though not intended to be in detail for a specialist, are sufficient to indicate what goes on and to encourage some to pursue the subject further.

In brief, the book is stimulating and helpful and strongly to be recommended to those for whom it is designed, all this in a volume which is refreshingly unintimidating in its size.

S. G. BROOK

Report of the Committee of Nursing (1972).
Pp. x + 327. London: H.M.S.O. Price:
£1.90.

The Committee set up in June, 1970 under the Chairmanship of Professor Asa Briggs "to review the role of the nurse and the midwife in the hospital and the community and the education and training required for that role, so that the best use is made of available manpower to meet present needs and the needs of an integrated health service", has produced a commendable and well written report.

The main recommendations include the establishment of a Central Nursing and Midwifery Council with responsibility for professional standards, education and discipline for the whole of Great Britain; reduction of the age of entry to

nursing to 17 years; a regional educational structure and an integrated career structure which will abandon the present divisions between branches of nursing.

A large part of the report deals with the proposed new educational and training structure which the Committee rightly consider to be particularly important and necessary to produce one caring profession. They propose that there should be two grades of nurses, Registered and Certificated. The early training of each grade would be identical and lead to the Certificate of Nursing Practice, which would be common to all branches of nursing including midwifery. Those students who wished to do so could continue with a further course of training that would lead to Registration. More able students could proceed to a Higher Certificate in a particular branch of nursing. Study for each step need not proceed sequentially. Special arrangements would be made for mature students entering nursing after training in another discipline or with a university degree; maximum flexibility within the education structure is an important feature in the proposals.

Considerable emphasis is given to the need for students of high academic ability and upon the need for research units to be established in association with universities and other institutions of higher education. The relative lack of research in nursing subjects is specially remarked upon. Other points such as the organisational and management framework for nursing, career structure and the use of nursing resources are given careful consideration and figure among the 75 recommendations of the Committee.

The Report expresses the view that "in time the public will come to expect a network of (medical) services starting with services based on group medical practice within or outside health centres". They point out the large, and increasing, number of attachments of nurses and health visitors to general practice and the change in the quantity and nature of domiciliary nursing services, that will result from the trend to concentrate the use of hospital facilities upon acute cases and the parallel development of an expanding domiciliary service based on group practices.

The role of the health visitor and the district nurse (the Report recommends that their title should be changed to 'family health sister' and 'family clinical sister' respectively), in the primary care health team may need to be more clearly defined. There is room for discussion between general practitioners and nurses regarding their respective roles, a dialogue that has begun in some areas with a mutual recognition of problems. The Briggs Report takes a forward-looking view and cites as examples for discussion, among others, group psychotherapy, first visits in group-practice attachment, chest auscultation, cervical smears, intravenous therapy and forceps application in midwifery.

The Report identifies defects in nurse/doctor relationships some of which relate to general