

College's *The Future General Practitioner—Learning and Teaching* (1972), and the book under review, by the Canadian College, appeared soon afterwards in 1973. It is a major work and contains much in a mere 100 pages. It can be compared usefully with the British College's *Future General Practitioner* and the Australian College's *Focus on Learning* which was published in 1976 and reviewed in this *Journal* (December, 1976).

Educational Objectives for Certification in Family Medicine is not likely to be widely read in Britain but it should be read by vocational scheme organizers and by those trainers and trainees who wish to understand the way general-practice education is going.

The Canadian College has produced a valuable document, although it will, of course, need to be modified from time to time.

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References

- Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (1976). *Focus on Learning in Family Practice*. Melbourne: RACGP.
 Royal College of General Practitioners (1972). *The Future General Practitioner—Learning and Teaching*. London: *British Medical Journal*.

A TEXTBOOK OF MEDICAL PRACTICE

J. Fry, P. S. Byrne & S. Johnson

Medical and Technical,
 Lancaster (1977)

665 pages. Price £9.95

The renaissance of general practice in the 1960s has been closely followed by a considerable volume of literature emanating directly from the discipline. Rightly doctors in primary care have recognized the inadequacies of the standard textbooks of medicine when applied to general practice.

Accordingly Professor Byrne, Dr John Fry and Miss S. Johnson have collected a distinguished team of general-practitioner authors to produce this book, and although I believe these authors have truly been motivated to share their experience, knowledge, and skills in order to promote better care of patients, it is clear that multi-authorship has its pitfalls. Several sections are excellent, others scholarly but not very helpful in practical terms, and some are mundane.

The early section by Byrne on clinical methods is short but packed with good advice. The chapters by Ian Gregg on pulmonary function, chronic bronchitis and asthma, are models of clarity.

Professor Wilkes's chapters on the care of the chronic sick and vulnerable and care of the dying should be compulsory reading for all trainees and new entrants into general practice, and many senior doctors too.

Dr Carne has nobly attempted to cover the care of children in general practice in 63 pages. However, allowing for the constraints of space, his coverage of heart disease is too short and too sketchy, and badly lacks advice on distinguishing between the innocent and significant heart murmur.

The parts of the book which are truly alive are those where the author's actual clinical experience shines through. Disappointingly this is sometimes followed by what is no more than the cataloguing of diseases.

Watts, in his contribution "Emotional Disorders", writes from his experiences in practice, cleverly inserting actual cases where appropriate, and the result is an outstanding contribution.

The editors stress in the preface that not all would agree with the views put forward in the book, and this will certainly be so. For example, I remain unhappy about the use of pethidine as an analgesic in gastroenteritis. Poly-myalgia rheumatica merits steroids; aspirin will not prevent the potential visual loss from an associated arteritis of the temporal vessels; not all doctors will eschew the use of steam in croup. Upper respiratory tract infections, bacterial or viral, are always a problem and Ian Watson's dictum of the symmetry of the signs in viral illness is missing. Methysergide, to me at any rate, has no place in the treatment of migraine, in view of its serious side-effects, and status epilepticus now deserves 'Valium', not phenobarbitone.

Such disagreements are not necessarily damaging, for they can stimulate a thoughtful reappraisal of one's own views.

It is difficult to determine just what audience the book is primarily aimed at—the vocational trainee or the established principal. To be fair, it has its value for both, but for the trainee, guidance on that valuable way of thinking which can accept the commonplace but must always be alert for the rare and life-threatening, is not fully developed.

Another disappointing omission is a section on records, an area of general practice which is so often done badly.

It is interesting that this *Textbook of Medical Practice* follows closely on the heels of another major book, *Practice. A Handbook of Primary Medical Care*. After studying them both I feel that each has its own individual approach and they should not be regarded as mutually exclusive. Both deserve a wide audience. There can be few doctors who

will not benefit by a study of this volume.

C. WAINE

A VISUAL AID TO THE EXAMINATION OF NERVE ROOTS

S. Hernandez Conesa & M. L. Argote

Baillière Tindall,
 London (1976)

24 pages. Price £2.50

I do not know how many other general practitioners find it difficult to remember which nerve roots supply which parts of the body and which simple tests in the consulting room can be used to test each dermatome?

I was intrigued with this little 24-page book, which covers a nerve root per page, gives clear, simple diagrams, and which has helped me to visualize the distribution.

It has instantly become one of only a dozen books that I like to have within reach in my consulting room, and even at 10p a page, it is well worth it.

D. J. PEREIRA GRAY

DRESSING FOR DISABLED PEOPLE

Rosemary Ruston

The Disabled Living Foundation, London (1977)

166 pages. Price £2

The Disabled Living Foundation is rapidly establishing itself as one of the most important sources of information for patients living at home and their advisers. One of the tremendous problems for those working in general practice, whether doctors or nurses, is to understand fully the effect of different forms of handicap on everyday life at home.

The Disabled Living Foundation has now begun to issue a series of books and booklets which systematically examine the practical problems of getting dressed, eating, and moving, when different parts of the body are crippled.

The information is now too detailed for all of us to know all the tricks and devices, but I have found recommending these books and booklets to patients to buy for themselves, or lending copies directly to patients, has been much appreciated.

Dressing for Disabled People is the latest in this series and can be warmly recommended.

D. J. PEREIRA GRAY