

## THE CONSULTATION

Sir,  
I always find it difficult to squeeze my perceptions of human behaviour into somebody else's pint pot. Dr H. J. Wright's article (July *Journal*, p. 400) is no exception. I found it thought-provoking but inadequate "for use in day-to-day clinical general practice", certainly with many of the patients who live in my area.

His classification appears to omit any mention of subconscious motivation. It works fairly satisfactorily in explaining how psychologically 'straightforward' patients behave, but when it comes to neurotics and 'game-players' it falls down badly. It must have this extra dimension.

For the psychologically straightforward each consultation is certainly critical in the conscious journey in and out of illness. For neurotics and game-

players I see the consultation as a much more incidental occurrence in an endlessly repeated process of self-justification and 'ego-maintenance'.

Perhaps Dr Wright should return to the drawing board and construct a rather less naïve and more powerful model?

TIM PAINE

Whiteladies Health Centre  
Whatley Road  
Clifton  
Bristol BS8 2PU.

## CHRISTMAS FAYRE

Sir,  
As you know, the Royal College of General Practitioners was founded more than 25 years ago. The

headquarters moved to the present site in 1964. During the last 14 years the building has been in constant use by general practitioners from the UK and overseas for conferences and exchanges of ideas to improve not only the NHS but world-wide family care. Now it is in need of redecorating.

The Provosts' wives of the Metropolitan faculties have decided to hold a Christmas Fayre on Saturday, 25 November from 11.00 to 15.30 hours at number 14 Princes Gate to help raise the necessary funds for redecoration.

Any of your readers who are in London on this date are warmly invited to attend.

MARY PRICE  
*Organizer*

28 Bishops Close  
Ham  
Richmond  
Surrey.

## BOOK REVIEWS

### INFANT FEEDING 1975: ATTITUDES AND PRACTICE IN ENGLAND AND WALES

Jean Martin

HMSO  
London (1978)  
173 pages. Price £7

To breast feed or not to breast feed has for a long time been a question that the medical profession answers with an unequivocal affirmative. Yet breast feeding mothers remain in a minority. Jean Martin, an unknown author (unfortunately no information is given about her) attempts to discover why this is so in a survey carried out on behalf of the Department of Health and Social Security. She has carried out her task in a thoroughly professional manner and has produced some interesting and useful findings.

At six weeks, only 24 per cent of babies in the survey were still breast fed, although 51 per cent were put to the breast initially. At four months the proportion had fallen to 13 per cent, despite current recommendations that mothers should breast feed for this length of time and delay starting solid foods until the baby is at least four months old. The method of feeding subsequent babies tended to follow the pattern adopted with the first baby. She arrives at the sensible conclusion that every effort must be made to get breast feeding right the first time.

Two independent attitudes were identified which seem likely to predict which method of feeding mothers will choose. The first, "distaste for breast feeding", may be associated with a woman's attitude to her breasts and to her sexuality, and is unlikely to be amenable to change in adult life. The second, called "breast feeding is best for the baby", is considered to be more susceptible to health education during pregnancy. However, it appears that antenatal clinic staff generally failed to provide information regarding relative merits of breast and bottle feeding.

One of the most interesting findings was that a delay in starting breast feeding of more than four hours had a positive association with early stopping.

This is a comprehensive survey, but while some of the results are of interest to all who come into contact with mothers and babies, much of the detail will appeal to a more specialized readership.

G. R. FREEDMAN

### ACCIDENTS AND EMERGENCIES. 2ND EDITION

R. H. Hardy

Oxford University Press  
(1978)

108 pages. Price £2.50

This book is short and to the point. It is written in a practical style with numer-

ous touches of wry humour. The author, who is now Senior Casualty Officer at the Hereford General Hospital, is also an experienced general practitioner and this is evident from his text. Among the handbooks currently available for managing accidents this book is probably the best value for money. This second edition is welcome.

D. J. PEREIRA GRAY

### ONE HUNDRED FATAL ACCIDENTS IN CONSTRUCTION

Health Safety Executive

HMSO, London (1978)

18 pages. Price 90p

Usually the only contact the general practitioner has with fatal accidents occurring in the construction industry is when he is called to attend a suddenly bereaved wife. Fortunately we do not experience many cases in a lifetime and, as they are usually isolated incidents the publicity they create does not have the same impact on the medical profession or the public that a major disaster would have. Yet how many of us realize that in 1975 181 men were killed in the construction industry?

The Health and Safety Executive have tried to publicize this problem by presenting a narrative account of one hundred fatal accidents occurring in the north and east of Scotland from 1960 to

1975. A sorry tale it makes—a story of lack of nets, belts, and crawling boards, of unshored trenches, of unsecured ladders, and unsafe roofs. Responsibility was thought to lie with management in 68 cases, with the deceased in 18, and with a fellow worker in two cases. In only 12 accidents was there no clear responsibility. Surprisingly, the report makes no mention of alcohol or other drugs as being even a possible factor.

This report is required reading for those who have a commitment in industrial medicine. It will also provide

valuable material for trainers and trainees. In view of its conclusions, I hope the Health and Safety Executive issues it free of charge to every firm involved in construction—at 90p a time this might be a worthwhile investment.

J. C. MURDOCH

# **OCCUPATIONAL MORTALITY 1970-1972**

*Decennial supplement  
Office of Population Censuses and  
Surveys*

HMSO  
London (1978)

224 pages. Price £4.75

This is the national standard reference for variations in occupational mortality in relation to social class and occupation. It is not light reading and is best used for reference purposes only and as such can be thoroughly recommended for reference libraries. It is particularly valuable as a source for general-practitioner trainees preparing sessions on the influence of social class on health statistics.

D. J. PEREIRA GRAY

## OBITUARY

### **Eileen Phillips HON. FRCGP**

**F**EW institutions have been so well and faithfully served as was the College through the years of its childhood by Eileen Phillips. Mrs Phillips, who was born on 14 July 1905, joined the College staff in 1955 and worked part time as Clerk to the Research Committee for 10 years while at the same time acting as secretary to Lady Docker. She was an extremely fast and accurate typist.

She played a main part in the beginnings of many aspects of the College which are now firmly established and her influence on the course of events in the late 1960s was considerable. When, as often happened, she was faced with unprecedented situations, she handled them with imagination, resourcefulness, and an almost maternal insight.

She became Administrative Secretary in January 1965 and during her five years in that position she never once missed a Council meeting and saw the College take long strides towards maturity. She kept an active interest in the committees with which she had been concerned, especially the Research Committee which she claimed held pride of place in her affections.

She was a good administrator, and this, combined with her warm and loyal personality, resulted in a happy working relationship not only with her staff, but with the many different doctors with whom she had to deal among the early membership. Her welcoming and gracious presence was particularly appreciated by visitors to the College from overseas and the furnishing of the building itself owes much to her good taste. She gave the College much of the furniture in the President's flat.

Honorary Fellowship of the College was conferred upon her at the Annual General Meeting in Leeds in 1971, a year after her retirement, and her dedication to and interest in the College's affairs continued throughout her retirement until her final illness.

She was devoted to her family and her late husband was most generous in his attitude to the demands made by the College on her time and energy.

She leaves a son and a doctor daughter to whom the College extends its deepest sympathy.

### **Trenchard Louis Robert Hall, MRCP**

**D**R T. L. R. Hall, who was in general practice in Plympton, Devon, was killed, with his wife, Patricia, and their elder daughter, Mary, in a train accident on 6 July 1978. He was 52.

Bob Hall was born in County Cork, Ireland on 30 January 1926 and was educated at Blundell's School, Tiverton, Devon. He then joined the Royal Sussex Regiment and served in Greece, where he was commissioned.

He entered the London Hospital and graduated MRCS LRCP in 1957. He met his wife, Patricia, whilst she was doing her midwifery training, and they married in January 1960.

In 1960, following hospital house posts at Barnet, Bury St Edmunds, and Bow, Bob Hall entered general practice, first as a trainee, then as a junior partner at Southend-on-Sea. In 1963 he moved to Plymouth and took over a single-handed practice in Plympton, which steadily increased in size. In 1974 he became a member of the Royal College of General Practitioners. Bob Hall always had a flare for practice organization and management, and it was mainly through his enthusiasm and initiative that a large multi-practice health centre was built at Plympton in 1975. He also became very interested in postgraduate training and was appointed Civilian Trainer to Naval Trainees in 1976.

Bob Hall was always a keen and conscientious committee man. He served as Assistant Honorary Secretary, BMA Representative, and Chairman to the Plymouth Division of the BMA. He was also an active