

Books Received

Textbook of Toxicology. KENNETH P. DU BOIS, M.SC., PH.D., and E. M. K. GEILING, PH.D., M.D. New York: Oxford University Press. 1959. Pp. x + 302. Price 52/-.

A text-book for the use of medical students, graduate students, and advanced undergraduates in the biological sciences.

Cancer in Families. A study of the relatives of 200 breast cancer probands by DOUGLAS P. MURPHY, M.D., and HELEN ABBEY, SC.D. Harvard University Press (Commonwealth Fund). London: Oxford University Press. 1959. Pp. x + 76. Price 20/-.

The main interest of this work lies in the clear exposition of the methods used, and the work involved, in a retrospective study of a specific disease. The author concluded "if a familial tendency to develop cancer did exist, it was not large enough to be detected in a study of this size".

A Preliminary Manual of Home Nursing. LUCY J. OTTLEY, S.R.N., S.C.M. St John Ambulance Association, London, pp. 84. Price 2s. 6d.

This little booklet intended for St John Ambulance nursing cadets, contains clear instructions and lucid diagrams, and should be of the greatest use in teaching home nursing.

*Medical News***The Churches' Council of Healing**

A conference was held by the Churches' Council of Healing on 28th and 29th October, 1959. Dr Sylvia Chapman attended as representative of the College.

It has been decided in view of the interest being displayed in mental health during this year, that "Stress as a factor in sickness" would be a valuable subject for study at the 1960 conference.

Human Relationships in the Care of Mother and Baby

The Royal College of Midwives are holding a residential conference at St Anne's College, Oxford, from the 28th March to 1st April, 1960. Fee £8 0s. 0d. (inclusive). The conference will be open to all who work in the sphere of maternity care and an invitation to participate is extended to interested general practitioners, as well as to nursing midwives, health visitors, physiotherapists, almoners, children's officers and psychiatric social workers.

Application forms are obtainable from the Education Officer, Royal College of Midwives, 15 Mansfield Street, London, W.1.

Seventh Annual Refresher Course in Family Psychiatry, 1960

Department of Child and Family Psychiatry
Ipswich and East Suffolk Hospital

The course has been designed to meet the need of medical practitioners desirous of maintaining contact with developments in family psychiatry.

The orientation of the course will be clinical. Sessions will be devoted to "Neurosis of Childhood", "The Delinquent Reaction", "The Psychosomatic Disturbances of Childhood", "Psychiatric Syndromes in Adolescence and Adulthood", "Psychopathology of the Family", "Interview Techniques and Psychotherapy", "Emotional Aspects of Mental Deficiency", "Speech Difficulties in Childhood", "The Psychoses—in Children and Adults", and "The Psychiatric Aspects of Childbirth".

The course is for five days, Monday to Friday, the 4th to 8th April, 1960. The fee for the course is 5 guineas, and it is recognized by Cambridge University Medical School, under the Ministry of Health Postgraduate Scheme for General Practitioners. General practitioners can obtain details of conditions (Form G.P.R.C.I.) under which fees, subsistence allowances, travelling expenses, and locum tenens grant are payable from the Secretary, Cambridge University Medical School, Tennis Court Road, Cambridge.

Provisional applications should reach the Department of Child and Family Psychiatry, 23 Henley Road, Ipswich (Ipswich 54641/2) *as soon as possible*.

The General Practitioner and the Dutch Public Health System.

Dr J. T. BUMA, 1959 (Published by The Netherlands Institute for Preventive Medicine, Leyden, Holland).

The *Netherlands Huisartsen Genootschap* is an association of Dutch general practitioners which Dr Buma thinks will restore the ailing morale of the general practitioner in Holland.

A study of ten practices was made, all known to be efficient, each being covered for one average working day. 707 patients were seen, entailing a ten-hour day for the doctors concerned. In many cases this meant that only superficial contact between doctor and patient was possible. Specialists were consulted in 26 per cent of the cases, social workers in 10 per cent, and other agencies in 9 per cent; 4 per cent of the patients sent to hospital.

No decision was made as to whether pressure of work interferes with early diagnosis of disease, and a continued analysis over a whole year is recommended. The value of screening the apparently healthy part of the population needs to be studied. A new approach

is possible for the general practitioner to contribute to social medicine and public health policy, but he lacks the necessary training for this.

A summary of the general practitioner's duties includes first aid in psychiatric emergencies (first aid for physical injury is mainly a municipal health service), examination and investigation of patients, preventive action and after-care, management of the infirm aged, and health education (as yet little is done).

The general practitioner's wide knowledge of the patient's circumstances entitles him to lead the clinical team, including auxiliaries. Non-professional assistance is required for administration of his practice.

PUBLIC WELFARE FOUNDATION UNDERGRADUATE PRIZE COMPETITION

Council is happy to announce that the above competition which has been held each year since 1957, will now become a permanent activity of the College. The competition is open to any senior medical student in any medical school in the United Kingdom and Eire. Six prizes of £40 each will be awarded to the six most successful candidates.

Applicants are asked to give a case history, with a suitable commentary, of one or more patients whom they have seen in general practice. The patient may, but need not, have been admitted to hospital. The student is required to have seen the patient on three or more occasions in the patient's own home or in the general practitioner's consulting room, and to have been introduced to the patient by the family doctor concerned. In presenting his material, the student should give adequate consideration to both the clinical and social aspects of the patient's problem. He is encouraged to discuss the case thoroughly before writing it up with the general practitioner concerned. This presentation should include an adequate and concise summary of the salient features.

The material (approximately 1,500 words) should be written or typed on one side only of quarto paper. Adjudicators will allot marks to each essay on the following basis: clinical presentation maximum 30 marks, assessment of the social aspects of the patient's problem maximum 30 marks, the candidate's appreciation of the general practitioner's role in diagnosis and management maximum 30 marks, comment and summary maximum 10 marks.

Application forms and further particulars may be obtained from the Dean's Office of the student's medical school or from **The Secretary, The College of General Practitioners, 41 Cadogan Gardens, London, S.W.3.** The closing date for the competition is 1st May.

Merseyside and North Wales Faculty Journal, September 1959.

This journal incorporates the faculty news-sheet, and is of a high standard. Articles are included on a variety of subjects from anaesthesia for beginners to details of the conversion of a garage into surgery premises. The absence of the author's names from each article is unusual, but the identity of the contributors can be discovered if the editorial matter is studied. Reports of the undergraduate and postgraduate education committees of the faculty board are published, and these show great activity among members. A reprint of a lecture by Dr Antoinette Pirie on the atomic era is added as a supplement.

North-east England, September 1959

This pleasing 16-page leaflet is filled with interesting information about the North-east England Faculty of the College. There is reference to undergraduate, postgraduate and research activities, and an illustrated account of new surgery premises constructed by Dr I. Fuller of Sedgefield. Contributions to the mistakes-I-have-made series from Dr N. D. Gofton, and a not-to-be-taken-seriously refresher course add further interest and variety, and there is an useful article on electric bells for bed-wetters.

The faculty is to be congratulated on its editor and his contributors.

An Epidemic of Unknown Etiology. A. J. LAIDLAW, L.R.C.P.E., *The Lancet* (30 May 1959), **1**, 1141.

In a small epidemic of a disease resembling influenza seen in a Worcester general practice a group of 48 patients with similar symptoms and signs was investigated. Eighteen patients who had previously enjoyed good health developed sudden intermittent frontal headaches associated with giddiness, nausea, vomiting, sore eyes, and sore throats. Most cases were afebrile and a few had bilateral conjunctivitis, slight neck rigidity, and injected fauces. These signs and symptoms lasted one or two days and complete recovery occurred within seven days. Treatment was symptomatic.

The history and the course of the illnesses suggested infection by a virus, but no virus was isolated from the sixteen specimens of faeces or from the eight pairs of throat swabs. Nor did serological investigations on twenty-nine blood specimens demonstrate any rise in antibody titre which might have been evoked by such an illness. (Author's summary).