

consists of 48 pages of a dry but accurate and, on the whole, relevant review of current antihypertensive drugs, followed by 220 pages of detailed review of three of them: metoprolol, labetalol, and prazosin. These three monographs are competent reviews of the literature, but little has been done to synthesize the evidence into clear policy options. The choice of these particular drugs seems

arbitrary and results in a poorly balanced book.

The discussion of known and possible long-term side-effects of beta blockade is inadequate for a book of this sort, and general practitioners should know much more about this particular subject than they will get from it. Use of drugs in the elderly and during pregnancy and lactation, all important topics for gen-

eral practitioners, are hardly discussed at all, and the few comments are difficult to find. Costs are not discussed. Drug interactions are again difficult to track down.

This is not a book for general practitioners, and most postgraduate libraries will think of better ways of spending £15.

J. TUDOR HART

OBITUARY

Professor P. S. Byrne, CBE, M.Sc, FRCGP



THE sudden death of Professor Patrick Byrne on 25 February 1980 came only 20 months after his retirement as Emeritus Professor of General Practice at the University of Manchester.

Patrick Byrne, born on 17 April 1913, revealed his talent early by winning a State Scholarship in 1930 and a cup for debating at the University of Liverpool, where he was also awarded a gold medal in surgery.

He was to receive many awards in later life and gave many named lectures. In 1968 he delivered both the first William Pickles Lecture and the Gale Memorial Lecture, and in 1971 gave the W. Victor Johnston Memorial Oration to the College of Family Physicians of

Canada. He was the first general practitioner to give the William Marsden Lecture at the Royal Free Hospital London, and he was the David Lloyd Hughes Memorial Lecturer at Liverpool.

He was awarded many honours overseas, including the Hippocratic medal of the SIMG in 1963 and the Sesquicentennial medal of the Medical University of South Carolina in 1974. He was awarded Honorary Fellowship of the College of Medicine in South Africa in 1975, and Honorary Membership of the College of Family Physicians of Canada in 1976.

Professor Byrne was appointed OBE in 1966, Adviser in General Practice to the DHSS in 1972 and CBE in 1975.

Patrick Byrne was a big man in every sense and liked to be among the first to do things. He was a Founder Member of the College and Chairman and Provost of the North-West England Faculty. He chaired the Education Committee of Council for six particularly important years and was subsequently Vice-Chairman of Council, Chairman of the Board of Censors and Chief Examiner. His College career culminated in the Presidency from 1974 to 1976.

He was a member of the College Working Party which wrote *The Future General Practitioner—Learning and Teaching* (RCGP, 1972) and he was co-author of several notable books, including *The Assessment of Postgraduate Training for General Practice* with J. Freeman (1976), and *Learning to Care*, which he wrote jointly with B. E. L. Long (1976). *The Assessment of Vocational Training for General Practice, Reports from General Practice No. 17*, written jointly with J. Freeman (1976), has been widely read. In addition he was co-editor of *A Handbook for Medical Treatment* and *A Textbook of Medical Practice* (Proctor and Byrne, 1976; Fry *et al.*, 1977). He was Chairman of the influential Leeuwenhorst Working Party which had a membership of 11 European countries and produced several important statements about general practice.

From the late 1960s until his death Patrick Byrne was

one of the most influential general practitioner authors in the world and the pioneering work in medical education which he initiated in his Department at Manchester led his discipline into education and training. He was the first to run courses for general practitioner teachers in 1966 and to emphasize the needs of medical teachers themselves. It will never be clear what might have happened to general practice if this important step had not been taken. It was largely due to a handful of people, of whom Byrne was one of the most important, that general practitioner trainers and organizers grasped the importance of a logical framework of teaching and learning in general practice.

His last book was another first: *Doctors Talking to Patients* written jointly with B. E. L. Long (1976), provided a scientific analysis based on a multitude of real consultations in real general practice. This *Journal* (1978) commented at the time of Professor Byrne's retirement on the significance of this work: "Just as Balint in the 1950s opened the door to the analysis of consultations using the perspective of the behavioural and psycho-analytical sciences, so Byrne later gave the study of the consultation in general practice a new dimension by changing the focus from theoretical speculation to objective analysis of what actually happened." The prediction in this *Journal* that that book would act as a springboard for new discoveries for the doctor/patient relationship is already being proved right. One of the many monuments and tributes to his fertile imagination was the analysis of doctor- and patient-centred consultations in which his own important theoretical models will surely stand the test of time.

As a man, Patrick Byrne stood out in a crowd. He was usually the centre of attention, partly because of his

great skill as a raconteur and partly because of his penetrating and sometimes devastating wit. He never lost his debating skill and his political awareness kept him ahead of many of his colleagues on committees, although for one who had achieved so much success, he was strangely sensitive to criticism.

Patrick Byrne was one of the great figures in British general practice, and his early and sudden death at the age of only 66 leaves a great sense of loss. He will long be remembered as one of the great personalities of our discipline, a powerful President of the College, and above all the first Professor of General Practice in the history of England. He will be greatly missed and leaves his wife Kathleen who worked in general practice until last year and always greatly supported him, two sons and four daughters.

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J. N. A. Pritchard, MRCP, DCH

JOHN Norman Andrew Pritchard died on the 15 January 1980 at the age of 61. He was educated at Clifton and Kings College Hospital and qualified in 1942. During the War he served with the Merchant Navy and was torpedoed. Afterwards he did some hospital work including a residency at Great Ormond Street where he took the DCH.

In 1948 he joined Dr E. J. C. Bockett in Farnborough, Hampshire as a partner at the start of the National Health Service, of which he remained an enthusiastic supporter all his life. He was involved in numerous activities in his community, but particularly in the Parish Church of Farnborough; he also found time to grow prize-winning roses, dahlias and strawberries. He travelled extensively and had a world-wide circle of friends and an inexhaustible fund of travellers' tales. He visited Australia, the Indian Continent, North America, most of Europe, and even went on a walking holiday in Nepal in his late 50s. He was attending the

BMA meeting in Hong Kong last autumn when he was first taken ill.

His extensive reading further expanded his range of interests and he supported many causes, of which the National Geographical Society and Amnesty International were probably nearest to his heart. In his practice he took a great deal of interest in the lives of his patients, and as a founder member of the College of General Practitioners saw it as a means to the end of improving the care of patients. He helped organize one of the first group practices and was among the first to involve nurses in a practice team. He founded the Frimley Medical Dining Club in the early 1950s and remained its secretary until his death.

He will be sorely missed by his patients, his partners and the staff of the practice he did so much to build up in the 32 years he spent in Farnborough. He leaves a mother, a widow, a son, and two daughters.

D. J. PRICE