

Foreword

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This symposium is timely. The toll of accidentally caused illness and death rises year by year until it has become clear that consideration of the whole problem of accident causation is now a matter of urgency. In any such consideration the published views of the participants of this symposium will demand close study.

The College of General Practitioners has already made a great impression on the quality of medical practice in Britain. This symposium, like others previously organised by the College has brought to bear on the subject a nice balance of specialist and general clinical interest, together with preventive and administrative medical concern.

One feature which has been well brought out is the paucity of accurate information at the disposal of the profession regarding the size of the problem as a whole. Without information planning becomes impossible.

It is, therefore, interesting to see that the epidemiology of accidents is at last being studied, one speaker having found a valuable source of information through the police. Other studies mentioned in the discussion also help to open up a field where much preventive action may be lying fallow requiring merely the stimulus of knowledge to start it into growth.

Having been unable to attend the symposium I was privileged to have an advance copy of the proceedings and I have no doubt that they will be of great value to those now reviewing casualty and accident services. I hope they will be widely read by all concerned in accident prevention and in the treatment of those unfortunate victims of our highly mechanized age. As the chairman emphasized, this is a problem "we have got to discuss", and the College and the Institute deserve the thanks of us all for having organized these discussions.