

encountered by the authors. Shock is well-covered by articles on the haemodynamic mechanism and treatment (Drs. M. H. Weil and H. Shubin) and on the special pharmacology of the adrenergic agonists and antagonists. Dr. Friedberg, with Drs. H. Cohen and E. Donoso, provides a carefully documented account of heart block and the part played by pacemaker therapy.

Like a good editor, Dr. Friedberg is

impartial on matters *sub judice*. Two chapters on the potassium-glucose-insulin treatment are placed side-by-side; Dr. B. Mittra is full of praise and his words will certainly delight Professor E. Sodi-Pallares, but Professor Borys Surawicz roundly denounces the system and can find no hope in it. The reader is left none the wiser.

As the focus of intensive coronary care moves closer towards the initial minutes of the attack, the hospital coronary care unit will

lose some of the attention it still attracts a decade after its invention. At the time of writing, the uses of coronary care units as set out in this book are relevant to all physicians involved in the problem. The complacent and uncritical attitude colouring many chapters must be accepted; the coronary care unit is the best that hospital care can offer.

WALTER SOMERVILLE

Repeat Prescription

Treatment or Diagnosis: A Study of Repeat Prescriptions in General Practice. Michael Balint, M.D., *et al.* (Pp. 182; 55s.) Tavistock Publications. 1970.

"To write prescriptions is easy but to come to an understanding with people is hard." This quotation from Kafka on the flyleaf will stir a ripple of guilt in many family doctors. They will be relieved to learn that repeating the same prescription, sometimes for years on end, may be the best treatment for some patients, as this study of those who ask little more of their doctors than an often repeated prescription shows. Such patients form an identifiable group with special characteristics. They contact their doctor more often than other patients but take care not

to let the relationship be too intimate and they start by offering symptom after symptom, to which the increasingly frustrated doctor can attach no clear diagnosis. The repeat prescription is a compromise, a way out of the stressful doctor-patient relationship. It symbolizes the "something" unspecified which the patient needs to alleviate the strains and tensions of his life. He does not want psychotherapy: "I know I've got problems, but I don't want to discuss them," said one long-repeat prescription patient, "It is too painful, I much prefer the sleeping pills." Repeat prescriptions, most of which are for barbiturates and tranquillizers, represent a new sort of psychotherapy—one without proximity and intimacy.

The doctor needs to lower his therapeutic

sights and abandon the goal of personal maturity for all patients. Some do not want to become involved in life because they fear personal intimacy as they fear change, and the repeat prescription is a mechanism for limiting one form of intimacy. It symbolizes stability, reliability, availability. It may, to the doctor, be irrational and unscientific, but to the patient, a middle-aged spinster for example who knows she has to live with frustrations, be meaningful and sensible.

This book is another step forward in the late Michael Balint's group research into the pharmacology of the drug "doctor." For repeat-prescription patients the optimal dose is the minimal one.

ANDREW SMITH

Health of the Nation

Public Health and Community Medicine: For the Allied Medical Professions. L. E. Burton, Ph.D. and Hugh Hollingsworth Smith, M.D. (Pp. 561; 140s.) Williams & Wilkins. 1970.

This must be one of the most interesting textbooks to be produced in the United States in recent years. The main objective is to describe the converging interests of public health and the other community medical care services, and the ever-increasing tendency to move away from private medicine to some form of comprehensive national health service. It emphasizes the closely knit relationship and interdependencies of all community activities: to promote, to restore, and to maintain the health of the people, and the current philosophy that good health and the availability of medical services should be included in the rights of citizenship. The text discusses mainly the presentday United States community

health services, and there are so many similarities to some of our own co-ordination problems that it makes exciting reading.

After a historical introduction the various administrative organizations are described at the international, national, and local level, including the role of voluntary health agencies, which in the past have played a larger part in the provision of community care in the United States than in Britain. There follows a chapter entitled "Convergence of Private Medicine and Public Health," which deals with the changing scene and argues the case for comprehensive medical care. It describes the existing forms of medical practice and how they might be developed and integrated. A comparison with our own efforts towards an integrated health service suggests that in Britain we have at least travelled part of the way along this difficult road.

The book then deals with the more for-

mal aspects of community health: epidemiology, statistics, and factors contributing to ill health and their control. There is a good chapter dealing with certain diseases to illustrate the epidemiological approach. Mental health and the importance of protective and preventive measures are described, as are a comprehensive list of presentday health problems such as alcoholism, misuse of drugs, and accidents.

This well-produced book can be thoroughly recommended; it is easy to read and made more interesting by numerous illustrations. The discussion has not been allowed to become too involved, and is thus suitable not only for medical students but for others studying for allied professions where a knowledge of community medicine is important. Finally, this book depicts the rapidly changing attitudes in the United States and contains many thought-provoking descriptions from the point of view of the current developments in Britain.

ANDREW B. SEMPLE

BOOKS RECEIVED

Books noticed here may be reviewed later

Radiation Protection I.C.R.P. Publication No. 16. Protection of the Patient in X-ray Diagnosis. A report prepared by a task group of Committee 3 of the International Commission on Radiological Protection. Adopted by the Commission in November 1969. (Pp. 46; 25s.) Pergamon Press. 1971.

Longitudinal Studies and the Social Sciences. W. D. Wall and H. L. Williams. (Pp. 245; 18s.) Heinemann. 1970.

Road Accidents—Medical Aid: A Guide for Medical Practitioners Involved at the Scene of Motor Traffic Accidents. Hanns Pacy, M.D., F.R.A.C.G.P. (Pp. 136; 20s.) E. & S. Livingstone. 1970.

Diseases of the Gastro-Intestinal Tract: Some Diagnostic, Therapeutic, and Fundamental Aspects. Ed. W. R. O. Goslings, M.D. (Pp. 126; 80s.) E. & S. Livingstone. 1970.

The Management of Liver Injuries. J. M. Little, M.S., F.R.A.C.S. (Pp. 105; 40s.) E. & S. Livingstone. 1970.

Progress in Surgery. Vol. 9. Ed. M. Allgöwer *et al.* (Pp. 180; 134s.) S. Karger. 1970.

The Orthopaedic Management of Spina Bifida Cystica. M. B. Menelaus, F.R.C.S., F.R.A.C.S. (Pp. 116; 60s.) E. & S. Livingstone. 1970.

Control of Communicable Diseases in Man. 11th edn. Ed. Abram S. Benenson, M.D. (Pp. 316; 16s.) American Public Health Association. U.K.: H.M.S.O. 1970.

Current Problems in Dermatology. Vol. 3. Ed. J. W. H. Mali. (Pp. 194; 138s.) S. Karger. 1970.

Elements of Medical Statistics. J. V. Smart, B.Sc., F.S.S. (Pp. 136; 35s.) Staples Press. 1970.

period January 1969-April 1971 will be considered. The closing date is 30 May and details are obtainable from Dr. A. G. Poulsen-Hansen, 24 Noel Road, London N1 8HA (Tel. 01-986 3123, extn. 6272).

People in the News

Air Vice-Marshal R. J. A. MORRIS has been appointed deputy director-general of medical services, R.A.F., in succession to Air Vice-Marshal G. H. DHENIN.

COMING EVENTS

Hearing and Deafness Film Association.—Foundation meeting, 16 January, 10 a.m., Institute of Laryngology and Otology, 330 Gray's Inn Road, London W.C.1. All those interested are welcome and details are obtainable from Mr. J. R. Muddle at the institute.

Royal College of Physicians of London.—Clinical physiology session, "Genetics I," 19 January. (See advertisement on page xxx.)

Anglo-American Medical Society.—Dinner lecture, "The Test-tube Baby," by Dr. R. Edwards, 27 January, Columbia Officers' Club, London W.2. Details and tickets (£2 5s.) from Dr. J. Carne, 7 Wood Lane, Highgate, London N.6.

British Psycho-analytical Society.—Course of six lectures on psychoanalysis, 16, 23 February, 2, 16, 23, 30 March, London W.2. Admission by ticket only. Details from Institute of Psychoanalysis, 63 New Cavendish Street, London W.1. (Tel. 01-580 4952.)

International Symposium on Metastases.—18-19 February, Sanremo. Details from Carlo Erba Foundation, Via Cerva 44, 20122 Milan, Italy.

Hampshire Medical Federation.—Copies of the programme for the Winchester and Basingstoke postgraduate medical centres, January-April, are obtainable from the clinical tutors at the Royal Hampshire County Hospital, Winchester, and at the Basingstoke and District Hospital.

St. George's Hospital and South-west Metropolitan Orthopaedic Training Scheme.—Details of the programme, January-April, are obtainable from the librarian, St. James's Hospital, Sarsfield Road, London S.W.12. (Tel. 01-672 1222, extn. 432.)

Bridgend Postgraduate Medical Centre.—Details of the programme, January-April are obtainable from the postgraduate organizer, Bridgend General Hospital, Quarella Road, Bridgend, Glam. (Tel. Bridgend 3341.)

Southampton Postgraduate Medical Federation.—Copies of the programme, January-May, are obtainable from the secretary of the postgraduate centre, General Hospital, Tremona Road, Southampton SO9 4XY.

Burton Graduate Medical Centre.—Copies of the programme, January-July, are obtainable from the clinical tutor of the centre, General Hospital, New Street, Burton-on-Trent, Staffs.

Glasgow Postgraduate Medical Board.—The programme for 1971 is available and details of courses may be obtained from Professor C. M. Fleming, dean of postgraduate medicine, the University, Glasgow W.2.

Manchester Medical Society.—Details of the monthly programmes are obtainable from the society's secretary, Medical School, the University, Manchester M13 9PL. (Tel. 061-273 6048.)

Lectures in Orthopaedic and Accidental Surgery.—At Heatherwood Hospital, Ascot, and Wexham Park Hospital, Slough, January—December. Copies of the programme are obtainable from Mr. R. H. Maudsley, Heatherwood Hospital, Ascot, Berks.

Final F.R.C.S.—Residential surgical and orthopaedic course for final candidates, 15-19 March, Doncaster Royal Infirmary. Fee £15. Details from the secretary, Postgraduate Medical Teaching Centre, Royal Infirmary, Doncaster, Yorks.

Chest and Heart Association.—Conference, "Preventive Techniques for the Modern Community," 2-3 March, London. Fee £6-50 (including lunch). Programme and registration forms from the C.H.A., Tavistock House North, Tavistock Square, London WC1H 9JE.

SOCIETIES AND LECTURES

*For attending lectures marked * a fee is charged or a ticket is required. Applications should be made first to the institution concerned.*

Monday, 18 January

HUNTERIAN SOCIETY.—At Royal College of Surgeons of England, 8.30 p.m., Hunterian lecture by Professor J. J. Haxhe (Louvain): Researches on Undernutrition and its Surgical Significance.
INSTITUTE OF DERMATOLOGY.—4.30 p.m., Professor C. D. Calnan: Physiology of Itching.

Tuesday, 19 January

MEDICO-CHIRURGICAL SOCIETY OF EDINBURGH.—At surgical lecture theatre, Royal Infirmary, 8.30 p.m., some cases of unusual interest.
ROYAL ARMY MEDICAL COLLEGE.—5 p.m., Professor C. V. Harrison: Tumours of Lymphoid Tissue.
ROYAL COLLEGE OF GENERAL PRACTITIONERS: SOUTH LONDON FACULTY.—At Fulham Hospital, 8.15 p.m., Dr. H. R. Jolly: Areas of Deficient Knowledge in School-age.
ST. CHARLES'S HOSPITAL MEDICAL CENTRE, LONDON.—8.45 p.m., Mr. A. G. Cox: Elective Surgery for Benign Peptic Ulcer.

Wednesday, 20 January

INSTITUTE OF DERMATOLOGY.—4.30 p.m., Dr. L. Szur: Radiotherapy for Benign Skin Diseases.
INSTITUTE OF DISEASES OF THE CHEST.—5 p.m., Dr. I. Gregg: The Chesty Child.
INSTITUTE OF PSYCHIATRY.—5.30 p.m., Professor G. S. Brindley, F.R.S.: Psychological and Physiological Approaches to Investigation of Long-term Memory.
INSTITUTE OF UROLOGY.—5 p.m., Dr. C. S. Ogg: Renal Transplantation.
ROYAL FREE HOSPITAL.—5.15 p.m., Professor J. Reid (Australia): Factors in Genesis of Cor Pulmonale.
ROYAL POSTGRADUATE MEDICAL SCHOOL.—11.45 a.m., Clinicopathological conference by Dr. J. Read: Recent Investigations into the Causes of Bronchial Narrowing; 2 p.m., Dr. I. Hamlin: Lymphoid Response in Carcinoma of the Breast.
TUNBRIDGE WELLS POSTGRADUATE CENTRE.—At Kent and Sussex Hospital, 12.45 p.m., Mr. A. W. R. Williamson: Is Thyroidectomy Still Necessary?
WHITTINGTON HOSPITAL, LONDON.—At Academic Centre, 11.30 a.m., Dr. H. Keen: Epidemiology of Diabetes.
WILLESDEN GENERAL HOSPITAL.—8.30 p.m., Medical Society meeting, Dr. G. Hamilton Fairley: Medical Treatment of Malignant Disease.

Thursday, 21 January

ABERDEEN UNIVERSITY.—At medical buildings, Foresterhill, 5 p.m., Professor K. T. Evans: Non-ionizing Radiation in Medical Diagnosis.
DUNDEE UNIVERSITY.—At Medical Sciences Institute, 5 p.m., Dr. Barbara M. Ansell: Juvenile Chronic Polyarthritides.
KENNEDY INSTITUTE OF RHEUMATOLOGY.—5 p.m., Professor J. G. Scadding: Extra-pulmonary Disease in Patients with Fibrosing Alveolitis.
ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS OF ENGLAND.—5 p.m., Hunterian lecture by Professor C. P. Bates: Continence and Incontinence—a Clinical Study of Urodynamics of Voiding and of Sphincter Mechanism.
ROYAL SOCIETY OF TROPICAL MEDICINE AND HYGIENE.—7.30 p.m., symposium and discussion: Role of Serum Antibodies in Malarial Immunity.
WESTMINSTER MEDICAL SCHOOL.—At Pave Street lecture theatre, 5.15 p.m., Mr. D. Waterston: Atresia of the Oesophagus.

Friday, 22 January

INSTITUTE OF LARYNGOLOGY AND OTOTOLOGY.—5.30 p.m., Mr. P. McKelvie: Cryosurgery.
NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE REGIONAL NEUROLOGICAL CENTRE.—At Newcastle General Hospital, 5.30 p.m., Dr. J. G. Martin-Rodriguez: Thoughts on the first thousand cases of stereotaxis in Newcastle.

ROYAL POSTGRADUATE MEDICAL SCHOOL.—11 a.m., Meeting with department of surgery, Newcastle: Research in Progress; 4 p.m., Dr. N. A. J. Hamer: Myocardial Contractibility.

Saturday, 23 January

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY MEDICAL SCHOOL.—At Fulbourn Hospital, 10 a.m., day symposium: General Practitioner Priorities in Psychiatry.*

APPOINTMENTS

LIVERPOOL REGIONAL HOSPITAL BOARD.—M. B. Macauley, D.M., M.R.C.P. (consultant physician, Walton Hospital); L. Rosenbloom, M.B., M.R.C.P., D.C.H. (Consultant paediatrician to the board and to United Liverpool Hospitals).
EAST ANGLIAN REGIONAL HOSPITAL BOARD.—A. J. Black, M.D., M.R.C.Path. (consultant pathologist, north-east quadrant of the region); J.S.M. Ogden, M.B., F.F.A.R.C.S. (consultant anaesthetist, north-east quadrant); E. C. Neser, M.B., F.R.C.S.Ed. (consultant orthopaedic surgeon, West Suffolk group H.M.C.); J. R. O'Brien, M.B., D.P.M. (consultant psychiatrist, St. Andrew's and Hellesdon H.M.C., Norwich, Lowestoft and Great Yarmouth H.M.C., and King's Lynn H.M.C. areas); S. M. Patient, M.B., F.R.C.S.Ed., M.R.C.O.G., D.C.H. (consultant obstetrician and gynaecologist, Ipswich and East Suffolk area); T. K. MacLachlan, M.B., M.R.C.P.Ed., D.P.M. (consultant in child psychiatry, East Anglian R.H.B., United Cambridge Hospitals board of governors, and Cambridgeshire and Isle of Ely County Council).

UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES

QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY OF BELFAST

M.D.—R. W. Stout.
M.B., B.Ch., B.A.O.—K. A. Bready, T. J. M. Craig, Susan M. Field, Elaine Fraser, B. K. D. Huss, D. J. Lowther, R. H. Rice, R. A. Simpson, D. G. Spence.

CORRECTIONS

Low-birth-weight Infants

In the article by Dr. G. M. Bryant and his colleagues on the Fate of Surviving Low-birth-weight infants with Coagulation Deficiencies on the First Day of Life (19 December, p. 707) there were two errors. The first sentence of the introduction should have read: "Infants of low birth weight who have severe prothrombin complex deficiency on the first day of life are more likely to die . . ." and in the section headed "Findings" the fourth sentence should have read: "In addition to this group of children with gross abnormalities there were a further five children who had one or more features of minor brain damage in the low Thrombotest group and one child in the control group. The features noted were a selective impairment of one particular field of development, clumsy movements associated with minor abnormalities of gait, a speech defect, and a squint."

Restless Legs Syndrome

In the paper by Drs. N. K. Banerji and L. J. Hurwitz (26 December 1970, p. 774) the reference in the first paragraph to Ekbohm's paper reporting a higher incidence after gastric surgery than in the general population should have been to his 1966 paper instead of 1960.

Notice to Authors

When original articles and letters for publication are not submitted exclusively to the *British Medical Journal* this must be stated.

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Authors wanting reprints of their articles should notify the Publishing Manager, B.M.A. House, Tavistock Square, WC1H 9JR, on receipt of proofs.