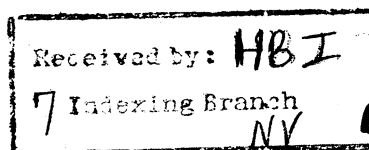


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## EDITOR'S CHOICE

BMJ

Medical treatment often fails and sometimes kills. We should never forget that, and this week's journal contains three examples: cholera vaccine, which is still widely used, provides little protection and has side effects (p 1033); treatment of pelvic cancer with neutrons—although promoted by the last British prime minister—is less effective than conventional treatment (p 1045); and phosphate enemas may cause life threatening illness in small children (p 1074). Psychiatrists are probably less dangerous, which is just as well as Andrew Sims, the current president of the Royal College of Psychiatrists, has a vision of the future

in which there are many more psychiatrists (p 1061). Elaine Murphy has a different vision, in which less skilled vocationally trained health workers would be much more important (p 1064). This debate will be fun to watch—just as our spring book supplement should be to read (p 1089). It includes advice on achieving longevity from the 82 year old Sir George Godber, and observations on war, left handedness, blindness, hypnagogia, death anxiety, and spas, which have long obsessed Europeans: "One would think," said Horace Walpole in 1790, "the English were ducks; they are forever waddling to the waters."