

Book Reviews

JOHN CONOLLY

Treatment of the Insane without Mechanical Restraints. By JOHN CONOLLY, with an introduction by RICHARD HUNTER and IDA MACALPINE. London: Dawsons. 1973. Pp. 380. Price £7.50.

This photolithographic reprinting of John Conolly's third book is introduced by the last scholarly instalment of his life. One hopes that some day the biographers will reprint this tripartite history in one cover and so make it available to a larger audience. For not all will want to read Conolly's original works, nor are many able, perhaps, to afford the book. Those who can will hear Conolly's authentic voice, or rather, voices. For the pious and sentimentally benevolent reformer gives way to the vigorous medical autocrat, denouncing the vices of economy, the inadequacies of private treatment, the caution of the Commissioners and the dangerous meddlings of Committees of Management. One feels at times a trace of irritation with the repetition of the propagandist who has made his point, and one has to remind oneself that Conolly's point was resisted and is repeatedly lost to sight even now. For restraint, in Conolly's mind, was only another name for punishment and neglect; useless, because it tried 'to smother a fierce fire by heaping more combustible materials upon it'. He did not seek simply to abolish handcuffs and straitjackets. He sought to base the treatment and management of the mentally ill on forbearance. Read all about it.

DOUGLAS BENNETT.

DYING

Life Before Death. Social Studies in Medical Care. By ANN CARTWRIGHT, LISBETH HOCKEY and JOHN L. ANDERSON. Routledge and Kegan Paul. 1973. x+284. Index 16 pp. Price £5.95.

Few people would challenge the authors' contention that the needs of the dying and their close relatives have been largely ignored. The Institute for Social Studies in Medical Care is to be congratulated for its initiative in mounting a study to determine what those needs are and how adequately they are met by existing health and welfare services. This book reports the methods and findings of this study.

The research was based on the retrospective accounts of close relatives of the quality of existence and care in the last twelve months in the lives of a random sample of 785 adults who died in England

and Wales in 1969. Early chapters helpfully put dying into perspective by describing the characteristics of those who die, where they die, the causes of death, and the problems the dying and their families commonly encounter.

The main body of the book contains valuable information about the quality of care provided by the hospital services, general practitioners, district nurses, community services, relatives and others. It highlights several major deficiencies in the provision of care and makes some practical suggestions about how these might be remedied. There is also a particularly interesting chapter on how aware people and their families are that they are dying, and on the attitudes of general practitioners to the matter of communication with them.

The major drawback to this very important book is that the authors have included too much detail. There are no less than 126 tables, over a third of them full page, and often rather complex. There is a long appendix and an excessive use of extracts from accounts given by the close relatives. This is a pity, because some of these anecdotes are extremely useful in vividly portraying some of the problems experienced by the dying. Some of their most valuable findings, therefore, lie buried in the text and are liable to be missed or poorly digested on first reading. The deficiency is only partially compensated for by the short summaries and link paragraphs that appear at the end of most chapters.

The glut of material is unfortunate, for although it is a book that ought to be in all libraries and required reading for all involved with the dying or in the education of those who will have to care, its style and price may well deter some of those who would most benefit from reading it. For those who are prepared to persist, the book will amply repay detailed study.

PETER MAGUIRE.

CHILDHOOD

The Writings of Anna Freud. Volume III: 1939-1945. Infants Without Families. Reports on the Hampstead Nurseries. Written in collaboration with DOROTHY BURLINGHAM. New York: International Universities Press. 1973. Pp. xxx+681. Index 13 pp. Price \$17.50.

This volume contains 56 monthly reports and an essay on the case for and against residential nurseries. The twelfth report, made at the end of the first year