

## Book Reviews

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Editor: Sidney Crown

**Medical Journals and Medical Knowledge.** Edited by W. F. BYNUM, STEPHEN LOCK and ROY PORTER. London: Routledge. 1992. 279 pp. £50.00.

The 150th anniversary of the *British Medical Journal* (BMJ) occurred in 1990, a year before the similar event of our own College, and this volume is the record of an historical conference for the occasion. The editors are two distinguished medical historians and the BMJ's then Editor, who has since turned to history himself. The result is certainly no self-congratulatory panegyric, but a series of objective historical studies which pull no punches when the BMJ has some reason for shame, as in Julian Tudor Hart's account of its opposition to both National Health Insurance and the National Health Service.

There is remarkably little systematic information about the history of scientific, technical, and medical journals before fairly recent times, which makes this collection of papers all the more useful. Roy Porter, that literary Stakhanovite, finds their origin in the mid-17th century, when matters of medical interest filled a large proportion of such scientific journals as the *Philosophical Transactions* of the Royal Society, although this interest fell off in the next century. In 1802, Dr Thomas Beddoes lamented that, "You must needs . . . roll your bloodshot eyes over thousands of pages weekly. Of their contents at the week's end, you will know about as much as of a district, through which you have been whirled night and day in the mail-coach". Yet he himself was a prolific writer.

Other than Dr Porter's *tour de force*, most of the papers are in fact more suited to this printed form than to their original presentation, where listening to frequent and sometimes lengthy quotations was far from easy. Psychiatrists will find most interest in Michael Shepherd's chapter on 'Psychiatric Journals and the Evolution of Psychological Medicine', which records that the first psychological publication was established in Germany by Karl Moritz in 1783. This was followed in 1818, also in Germany, by the first recognisably psychiatric journal, which only lasted five years. The earliest still existing journals were the *Annales Médico-psychologique* of 1843 and the *American Journal of Insanity* in the following year. Our own journal began in 1853, not 1855 as stated here. Later in the century, a

number of important journals combined psychiatry and neurology, but almost all these eventually split into two. Professor Shepherd performs the remarkable feat of never mentioning the words "*British Journal of Psychiatry*" in his account.

Tudor Hart aims furious salvos at the free journals distributed to general practitioners – "Just as bad currency drives out good, free journals offering instant clinical wisdom and business success threaten the institutional press". As a result of this development, general subscription journals are said to have largely ceased to exist in many parts of the world, and Italy no longer has a single independent general medical journal. Not surprisingly, this passage ends with ritual denunciation of "the interests of the pharmaceutical industry", although with no alternative suggestion for developing new drugs. Discussing the interaction of the BMJ with consultants, Sir Christopher Booth records that "The Royal College of Physicians . . . has an unequalled record in attempting to stifle potential competitors" – a view that anyone familiar with the history of our College can strongly endorse. But publication, of course, is a means of communication, and when a book like this, without a single illustration, carries a price of £50, the message is likely to reach only the fortunate few.

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**MRCPsych Tutor. Part 1 MCQs.** By K. BHUI, A. LEWIS and M. PHILPOT. London: WB Saunders. 1992. 64 pp. £7.95.

This book is intended to help candidates prepare for the multiple-choice question (MCQ) paper of the Part 1 MRCPsych examination. The book contains 120 MCQs: two self-contained groups of 50, reflecting the format of the examination; and an additional 20 psychology questions. A brief explanation is given with each answer, and there is an index to guide the reader to questions related to particular subject areas.

The MRCPsych Part 1 examination tests the candidates' knowledge in basic psychopathology, methods of clinical assessment, basic clinical pharmacology, neuroanatomy, neurophysiology, and neuropathology. The

book sets out to cover all these areas, with the addition of psychology and 'therapy' in acknowledgment of their appearance in recent papers. However, the authors have failed to include any questions on clinical assessment. Brief explanations are given with most of the answers, although these do not form useful revision notes owing to the random grouping of the questions.

One of the main purposes of practicing MCQs is to learn the techniques of answering such questions. Here, the book claims to be "of great benefit", yet it is in this very area that guidance is lacking. For example, explanations of MCQ terms such as 'characteristic of' and 'recognised feature of' might have been included.

Overall, this book provides two good practice papers. It may relieve the tedium of revision and encourage the reader to explore the cited texts, but on its own is unlikely to help with MCQ technique. In addressing purely the Part 1 examination, it provides a useful addition to a small list of titles, but in the wider field of psychiatric MCQ books it is unexceptional.

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**Principles and Practice of Restorative Neurology.** Edited by ROBERT R. YOUNG and PAUL J. DELWAIDE. Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann. 1992. 222 pp. £40.00.

It is something of a shock to come across 'restorative neurology' in the title of a volume in the Butterworths International Medical Reviews in Neurology, as though it were an accepted 'subspecialty of neurology' (the editors' contention) whose introduction one had missed. The editors ask "...whether restorative neurology is a new field in neurology or is only a new name for an old practice, namely rehabilitation". They answer by suggesting that, following the acute management of central nervous system (CNS) lesions, restorative neurologists should now be employing "a pathophysiological approach to the patient combined with good knowledge of neurobiology" in order to enhance biological recovery processes like plasticity and compensatory mechanisms. After this, "when the lesion has reached a stable state, rehabilitation and retraining may commence". This general definition is less secure than it seems, however, since a majority of the contributions to the volume deal in fact with late and continuing rehabilitation.

Although the case for 'restorative neurology' as a special discipline is not successfully made, there are contributions of interest. The book begins with discussions of the epidemiology of disability and the problems of measurement in relation to the evaluation of treatment effects. There follow reviews of advances in the neuro-

chemical effects of CNS lesions, brain plasticity and its enhancement through training, pharmacotherapy, and biofeedback and biomechanical engineering. Next come chapters on the rehabilitation of particular disorders – neuromuscular disease, stroke, spinal-cord injury, and multiple sclerosis. Thereafter the relative coherence of the book begins to loosen, with a hodge-podge of chapters on various surgical techniques (for spasticity, Parkinson's disease, and epilepsy), two provocative (but hardly 'restorative') chapters on molecular genetics and genetic engineering and, most remarkably, one entitled "Rehabilitation in Parkinson's disease, day care programs for demented patients, and aids for living and home modifications for patients with neurologic physical disability", which lacks even internal coherence. Among these latter chapters, however, is a fine review of neurostimulation techniques.

Although the title promises much more than can yet be delivered, from the point of view of those working in neurological rehabilitation, this is a book of interest, providing helpful reviews and reference lists. Unfortunately, its contents suggest that neurology remains fixated upon the subcortex, so that there is little to excite the interest of the psychiatrist.

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**Mental Health Services in the Global Village.** Edited by LOUIS APPLEBY and RICARDO ARAYA. London: Gaskell. 1991. 221 pp. £10.00.

Research is concerned with discovering the right thing to do, and audit with ensuring that it is done right. In 1990 the *Lancet* published the International Commission for Health and Development's finding that 95% of the world's money for health research is spent in the developed world. It is not surprising that research on health issues is uncommon in most developing countries and research on mental health is even rarer. In the absence of any statistical evidence on this important subject it is logical that the editors should have invited 28 contributors from 16 countries to write review articles about the care of the mentally ill around the world.

In every country, economic and cultural circumstances are a powerful influence on mental illness – its frequency, recognition, treatment and compliance. The chapters cover three developed countries – Italy, Spain and the UK – and 13 developing countries: India, Thailand and Korea in Asia; Somalia and Zimbabwe in Africa; Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Egypt, and Libya in the Middle East; and Brazil, Chile, Columbia, and Mexico in South/Central America. The authors have highlighted the current state of affairs based on their own experiences, and have given opinions on future needs in the practise of psychiatry. The political bias is kept to