

A PSYCHIATRIST'S ILLUSION?

Intervention in Psychiatric Nursing; Process in the one-to-one Relationship. By JOYCE TRAVELBEE. Oxford: Blackwell Scientific Publications, for F. A. Davis Company, Philadelphia. 1969. Pp. 280. Price 75s.

The author's aim is to assist nurses to form a one-to-one relationship with mentally ill individuals and their families. The nature and scope of psychiatric nursing is explored, and defined as an interpersonal process to assist the patient, his family and the community to cope with mental illness.

This complex process seems to be undertaken by the nurse alone, for, although collaboration with other health disciplines is briefly mentioned the nursing practitioner's role is shown primarily as that of a counsellor and psychotherapist and no longer that of handmaiden to the doctor.

The nursing practitioner function has only one dependence on the medical profession—the execution of medico-legal orders—so that a psychiatrist cannot 'order' nursing care any more than a nurse can 'order' medical care.

Selection of patients for one-to-one relationship and its termination seems to be also a province of the nursing practitioner alone, with the apparent exclusion of the psychiatrist. If he insists that medical orders must be carried out, he should be educated by the nursing practitioner—though preferably without alienation!

It is rather a disquieting book to read for anyone who is trying to make tripartite administration work and who is still under the illusion that a psychiatrist has full responsibility for the clinical care of his patient.

The book, though somewhat dogmatic, is well written and has a large and well selected bibliography. It is clearly intended for the university graduate nurse, which makes it more suitable, as well as the price, as a reference book for nursing officers and tutors rather than a textbook for student nurses.

W. WOLLEN.

THE FIRST AUSTRALIAN THERAPEUTIC COMMUNITY

Fraser House. Theory, Practice, and Evaluation of a Therapeutic Community. By ALFRED W. CLARK and NEVILLE T. YEOMANS. Springer Publishing Company, Inc., New York. 1969. Pp. XV + 282. Price \$7.50.

The Introduction to this book tells us that Fraser House, a voluntary psychiatric hospital in New

South Wales, was the first therapeutic community to be established in Australia. A research team, led by the Medical Director of the hospital, Dr. Yeomans, and a psychologist, Dr. Clark, began to study the theory, organisation and effectiveness of the Unit shortly after Fraser House was founded in 1959. This book is an account of their study.

The first part of the book is a well-documented and lucid account of therapeutic community ideology in terms of social context, deviance, and systems theories. Psychiatrists who are unfamiliar with this approach, which owes much to the work of Talcott Parsons, Harry Stack Sullivan, and Maxwell Jones, will find an excellent summary of it here.

Yeomans and Clark describe the methods of treatment employed at Fraser House in terms of their sociological approach. The cornerstone of treatment is psychotherapy, particularly in groups, both large and small, and patients are encouraged to discuss everything of importance to them in the appropriate group. Resocialization is encouraged by democratic self-government by patient-run committees and groups with specific functions.

The authors' description of the impressive programme of therapeutic activity in Fraser House bears witness to their enthusiasm for and commitment to their ideology and also sets the stage for their account of evaluation of treatment. Research strategy, as well as treatment practice, was based on ideology. The variables studied therefore included patients' expectations of improvement, perceptions of the unit, and 'role participation'—which included involvement both in formal groups and in the informal Unit social structure. The various methods used to assess these matters are clearly described. The results were correlated with several measures of improvement, both in hospital and subsequently.

This work is worth most careful study by all interested in evaluating psychiatric services and in understanding what happens to patients in hospital. Criticisms of the work are, in a sense, compliments; the research has been thorough and is reported clearly enough to clarify the immense difficulties, of work in this area. It seems important, for example, to define criteria of improvement which are as specific as possible, and to devise appropriate measuring instruments, before a study is begun, rather than to use ratings of 'improvement' if the main interest is in those who are or are not 'improved' rather than in the ways raters use the term 'improvement'.

It is also difficult to know how to select the variables which are most worth studying. Commitment to an ideology may generate testable hypotheses, but may close the eyes of the investigator to more germane variables derived from an alternative theoretical

approach. Thus, it may be that the hospital behaviour of Yeoman and Clarks' patients would have been most parsimoniously understandable in terms of the different disorders from which the patients were suffering—in other words, in terms of diagnosis, a medical concept. Without some sort of ideology, on the other hand, it may be difficult to understand research results, even if there is enough motivation to carry out research at all.

So far as this reviewer is aware, the crucial experiment in this area has not yet been done. (There may now have been enough exploratory work for it to be justified.) Patients would be admitted at random to one of two treatment situations which were as different as possible. In the context of this book, this would have entailed a second 'Fraser House', run on say, traditional medical-psychiatric lines, patients being admitted randomly to the therapeutic community and traditional settings. Such an experimental possibility has only to be stated for the enormous practical difficulties to be obvious. Nevertheless, the hypothesis that daily group therapy, or a therapeutic community approach is helpful (in any sense of the word) to an assortment of psychiatric patients remains unproved. Of course, the same is true of many other forms of psychiatric intervention.

If useful functions of research and of the writing of books include the stimulation of ideas and refining research questions, then this book deserves to be widely read.

J. P. WATSON.

BASIC PSYCHOANALYTIC CONCEPTS

The Psychoanalytic Concepts on the Libido Theory. Edited by HUBERT NAGER. Pp. 130. Price £2.

Basic Psychoanalytic Concepts on the Theory of Dreams. Edited by HUBERT NAGER. Pp. 121. Price 35s. London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd. 1969.

Freud never wrote a textbook of psychoanalysis, nor did he take the trouble to state explicitly from time to time which of his theories he had modified or abandoned. He firmly denied that he had left behind a comprehensive system of observations and theories. To him psychoanalysis was always in flux, and there was nothing final about it. Nevertheless, there are certain basic concepts which stand out in the development of psychoanalytic theory. Many of them changed their original meaning in Freud's writings.

The editor, one of Dr. Anna Freud's close associates, initiated an enquiry into the history of psychoanalytic thinking. Assisted by a team of workers trained in the Hampstead Child Therapy Course and Clinic, he set out to trace the course of basic psychoanalytic concepts through Freud's working life. There was no intention of presenting them in a final form. Dr. Anna Freud, in her preface, states the fourfold purpose of Dr. Nager's work: it was to facilitate the understanding of psychoanalytic thought and terminology; to define concepts and their role in the development of psychoanalytic theory; to reduce misunderstanding and confusion arising from wrong use of basic concepts; to assist students of psychoanalysis in their studies and their research work. These two books, to be followed shortly by two more, will serve those functions admirably. The style is lucid and precise.

The first volume deals with the concepts of sexuality subsumed under the heading of libido theory, one of Freud's most revolutionary contributions to developmental psychology. It formed a link with biology, in which psychoanalysis was rooted. The changes and amplification of this theory in the course of Freud's writings are noted and explained. It is still the most significant contribution to the understanding of the sexual perversions. Twenty-four basic concepts concerning the evolution of libido are listed, together with references to Freud's work. Although the status of libido theory changed considerably in the course of Freud's thinking, it will remain the most astonishing, most consistent and stimulating of his theories.

The second Volume deals with what Freud liked to regard as his most brilliant work, *The Interpretation of Dreams*, published in 1900. Dr. Nager and his collaborators have isolated from this work twenty-five basic concepts, and have extracted all significant statements made by Freud at any point of his life on dreams and dreaming. The importance of this work goes far beyond the subject of dreaming, for in the study of dream contents several of the mental mechanisms, which have since been incorporated into psychology, were described and illustrated for the first time.

When the series is completed it will present an authoritative guide and commentary to the most important parts of Freud's work. It should prove equally valuable to students of psychoanalysis, psychiatry and psychology, as well as to those engaged in a critical evaluation of Freudian concepts, which have maintained their vitality since the beginning of this century.

E. STENDEL.