

## BOOKS AND REVIEWS

possibly as the physical expression of an inner conflict or difficulty to adapt.

Balint's research and training methods, his small discussion groups, are proving to be a practical means of developing the vocational personality and of teaching the relationship between the doctor and his patients...

*Bruxelles-Médical*, Bruxelles, 1969, No. 2.

Our century will no doubt be marked by the discovery of nuclear energy, the development of the computer, the conquest of space and the first heart transplant. But apart from these sensational discoveries, it will also be marked by the advent of a new phenomenon, namely the collective awareness of certain threats weighing on the future of humanity.

For the first time in his history man realises that his future on earth is seriously threatened; threatened by destruction by thermo-nuclear warfare, threatened by asphyxia through the pollution of water and air, threatened by famine owing to a population explosion. And for the first time, humanity is beginning to realise that over and above the races, ideologies and religions, it must unite in order to take energetic and collective precautions. If humanity is to survive, that is to say not only to survive but to advance, it must succeed in controlling nuclear armaments, air and water pollution as well as fertility.

I feel I am in a position to state that from a purely technical point of view, we now have at our disposal an arsenal of contraceptive methods which should enable us to face up to the demographic problems. But it is not enough to be in possession of efficient methods for checking the threat of overpopulation of our planet; what is needed is to be able to use them on a large scale, which implies an education of the masses, something which is still far from being attained, and it is in that direction that our efforts ought at present to be directed. (*J. Schwerts*)

**The Conflict of Generations in Nursing**, by Yrjo Lethi, *International Nursing Review*, Basel, 1969, Vol. 16, No. 2.

This seemingly unavoidable conflict can be eased by certain practical measures associated with the meeting situation itself. Evidently the situation ought to be prepared very carefully and with long-range aims. It would hardly cause very great trouble if the older workers were informed about the affair beforehand, and surely it would be still better if they were allowed in some way to participate in choosing the new employee, for instance by expressing their opinions. Similarly, one should explain to the new worker what is awaiting her. Experience seems to

indicate that a detailed and realistic description in advance makes for constant working relationships.

When a new worker comes to work for the first time, a positive atmosphere must exist to create possibilities for lasting co-operation and trust. Many places have experimented with special orientation programmes, and they have certainly been justified.

The usual field of work includes an innumerable amount of interlinked details, and it will take many weeks before the new worker is able to handle everything unassisted, even if the person were able to adapt herself in a flexible way. The orientation programme may be carried out by an older person, ready to advise the newcomer and to give her an account of the customs and views prevailing in this particular place of work. The most general mistake made about orientation programmes is to consider them a kind of account of the demands of the place of employment — which is hardly building bridges for mutual co-operation. The expectations, wishes and demands of the newcomer ought also to be brought out, in order to plan opportunities for realizing them. It might be more advantageous to move from a short interview, made right in the beginning, to a more profound interview after the orientation programme. During this second interview the results of the orientation could be controlled.

If seen from outside the orientation programme is a waste of time. It is probable, however, that it produces a lasting foundation for contentment and success in work. Opportunities are given to all participants to take part of their own free will and make a positive contribution. At the same time conditions have been created for the social maturing of each individual worker.

In practice the conflict between old and young worker is a hard, everyday reality. It poses not only the question of the difficulties of social behaviour, but of the difficulty of existence in the modern environment.

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