

PROCEEDINGS  
THE PRACTICE OF PEDIATRICS  
A Panel Discussion

Early in 1959 an editorial in *PEDIATRICS* (23:253, 1959) entitled "Can the new pediatrics be practiced?" referred to some obstacles facing pediatricians now entering general practice. It seemed that the scope of pediatrics and the knowledge of children had been extended enough in recent years to justify the term new pediatrics, and that these advances were becoming difficult to apply in a hurried general pediatric practice. The question was raised as to whether it was not somewhat urgent to take more deliberate steps to make it easier and more inviting to practice pediatrics as a truly sophisticated specialty—to take cognizance of the improved capabilities of pediatricians and to foster recognition of the comprehensive service they can render when the working conditions are favorable. Furthermore, it was emphasized that there appeared to be need for concern about the future appeal of the practice of pediatrics rather than with the fate of pediatrics as a branch of medical science, and that this distinction was fundamental to intelligent discussion.

Now we have an opportunity to consider the opinions of leaders within the American Academy of Pediatrics in the following series of papers. These were presented at the 1960 Spring Session of the Academy in a panel discussion organized by a prominent official of the Academy to deal with the question posed by the editorial a year previously.

Some of the participants took serious exception to the term new pediatrics. Less seriously, one gains the impression they might have preferred *Ye Olde Pediatrics* to describe the prevailing practice, to go with their suggestion it simply needs to be made "better." The distinction between "better" and "new" pediatrics does not seem clear or consequential at first glance, except that the present potential of pediatrics may include some new elements which were not part of pediatric practice of yesteryear. Of course a dynamic progressive enterprise will be ever new, and we hope better.

The reader can skip the semantic quibbling and see what this group of practitioners has to say that promises to make pediatric *practice* "better" and of maximum service to children and an appealing career for able physicians, in the years to come.

THE EDITOR

INTRODUCTORY

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**I**N A FINAL act of what I can only interpret as retribution for the tasks imposed upon them, your Program Committee drafted its chairman to set up the concluding program of this session in a form of a panel on the topic, "Can the New Pediatrics be Practiced?"

Fortunately, no restrictions as to content or participants were given and for this, at least, my thanks to the committee.

Periodic episodes of self-examination by

various segments of the medical profession have been among the more salutary advances of Medicine for generations, but increasing emphasis upon the change in pediatric practice seems to date back only about 3 years to a Letter to the Editor of the *Journal of Pediatrics* by Dr. Frank L. Tabrah in December, 1957. This letter quoting an article of the November, 1956 issue of *Medical Economics*, stated among other things that "1/3 of the pediatricians in prac-

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PEDIATRICS, November 1960

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The Editor

*Pediatrics* 1960;26;872

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OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN ACADEMY OF PEDIATRICS

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