

Reviews

RECONDITIONING BY PHYSIOTHERAPY

Rehabilitation, Re-education and Remedial Exercises. By Olive F. Guthrie Smith, M.B.E., C.S.M.M.G. With foreword by Lord Horder. (Pp. 412; illustrated. 25s.) London: Baillière, Tindall and Cox. 1943.

The scope of this book is aptly summed up in Lord Horder's foreword. "Reconditioning and rehabilitation," he says, "are in the air; with many folk who pay lip-service to these ideas they remain in the air. In Mrs. Guthrie Smith's book we 'get down to brass tacks,' we follow the special techniques that are appropriate for particular cases, and we realize the extent and the intensity of modern developments in physiotherapy."

For many years the author has preached the gospel of rehabilitation through active exercise, and has earned for herself a deservedly wide reputation for her pioneer work in this field. In her introductory chapter she outlines the basic principles of exercise therapy and deals with the psychological aspects of rehabilitation. In this latter connexion one sentence deserves to be quoted: "The whole art of rehabilitation is to put the responsibility of his own salvation on to the patient, while at the same time making it possible for him to accept this responsibility."

After reviewing the physical and physiological principles underlying exercise therapy, the author proceeds to a detailed account of the various types of exercise appropriate to the re-education and redevelopment of injured or diseased muscles. One of the most important principles in any exercise system is that of progression. In the earliest stages of extreme weakness, such as in poliomyelitis, the muscles require positive assistance—the exercise must, in fact, be "weightless." At the other end of the scale the muscles of labouring men must be hardened by making them work against resistances approximating to the stresses of their work. The physiotherapist must be able to pass from one end of this scale to the other by almost imperceptible stages, and the main part of this book is concerned with a detailed account of how this is done. The author is a pioneer in the development of "weightless" or "suspension" exercises for the early cases, and this is the first account in book form of her original work.

In dealing with resistance technique the various uses of pulley-and-weight apparatus and of springs are discussed, though it is perhaps not sufficiently stressed that these resistance methods have their dangers as well as their advantages. In certain conditions—e.g., in knee-joint injuries—it is of crucial importance to use the correct amount of resistance at all stages, and we hope that in a future edition the author will have something to say on these important matters of dosage and timing in relation to resistance technique. Supplementary chapters, dealing with recovery after fractures, rehabilitation of chest and maternity cases, recreational therapy, electrotherapy, joint manipulation, and plastic operations, are contributed by experts in these particular fields.

This book is well written, well illustrated, and original and stimulating in its outlook. It deserves to be read not only by the physiotherapists to whom it is primarily addressed, but by every surgeon and physician who would wish his direction of the physiotherapist to be intelligent and progressive.

CONSPECTUS OF PROGRESS IN MEDICINE

The 1943 Year Book of General Medicine. Edited by George F. Dick, M.D., J. Burns Amberson, jun., M.D., George R. Minot, M.D., William B. Castle, M.D., William D. Stroud, M.D., and George B. Eusterman, M.D. (Pp. 784. \$3.00.) Chicago: The Year Book Publishers.

The *Year Book of General Medicine* can be relied upon to give a comprehensive view of its swiftly changing panorama. The current volume is no exception to the rule. It is not surprising that a good deal of attention is paid to problems connected with blood transfusion—hence the discussion of the Rh factor, the dosage of either albumin or plasma after a severe injury or burn, and the causes of severe haemolytic reactions. Epidemiology is represented by a thoughtful paper on influenza by C. H. Andrewes, another on malaria as a world menace, and another on epidemic catarrhal jaundice as typically

a military disease which shows regional variations. It is surprising to learn that 2,500 cases occurred during the short battle of Crete. Deficiency in a particular ingredient of the vitamin B complex, which has been labelled "N," is believed by R. M. Calder to aggravate damage to the liver cells. Ankylosing spondylitis is described as a complication of brucellosis. Kidney diseases come in for consideration, particularly in relation to hypertension, and it is interesting to note that, after several swings of the pendulum, lipid nephrosis is no longer regarded as a separate entity, but merely as a stage in nephritis through which some cases pass. The derided doubters can now recover their self-esteem.

Wartime conditions add to the clinical importance of acute pulmonary oedema. Luisada argues that the physician should have at hand morphine, atropine, sodium phenobarbital, and papaverine hydrochloride. The first three are best when toxic gases, drowning, or skull injuries are the cause of the attack, while in cardiovascular conditions the first two and the last one are to be preferred. Newer concepts in the diagnosis of congenital heart diseases based on clinical and angiocardiac x-ray studies are fully discussed. We would suggest, however, that a classification based on the embryology (and therefore on the evolution) of the mammalian heart would make more intelligible what many otherwise find a mere collection of bizarre distortions. Industrial medicine has received a recruit in the awkwardly named condition of bagassosis. Bagasse is the broken sugar-cane after the sugar has been extracted and is used in the preparation of board. Although this contains 5.7% silica the symptoms differ in several respects from any known form of silicosis, as shown by Castleden and Hamilton-Paterson in our columns (*B.M.J.*, 1942, 2, 478). These are but a few of the many interesting subjects discussed in the *Year Book* for 1943.

DR. PARKES WEBER'S WRITINGS

F. Parkes Weber's Collected Writings. In Celebration of his 80th Birthday and 50th Anniversary as Visiting Physician to the German Hospital. London. May 8, 1943. Edited by the Medical Staff.

The combination of enthusiasm for clinical research and a profound knowledge of medical literature has given Dr. Parkes Weber a unique position in the profession. It was a happy thought, therefore, for his colleagues at the German Hospital to celebrate the 50th anniversary of his election to their staff and his 80th birthday by planning a *Festschrift*. Wartime restrictions have prevented this from taking the form of printing even a selection of his more than a thousand papers. The reported speeches delivered on that occasion were characterized by sincere admiration rather than by eloquence, and, apart from the bibliography, the principal value of this book is the excellent synopsis of his principal contributions compiled by Dr. K. Blum. Dr. Parkes Weber has collected rare diseases as some have collected rare butterflies, but to imagine that it is merely rarity value which appeals to him would be to misinterpret the whole purport of his work. He has used rarities to help towards the explanation of problems of general interest, as the late Sir Archibald Garrod did in his *Inborn Errors of Metabolism*, though he has cast his net more widely. Thus there are pioneer observations on polycythaemia, erythrocyanosis, telangiectases, panniculitis, the "pink disease," and the condition now known as Cushing's syndrome. In some instances he has approached generalizations which cannot yet be fully formulated in the present state of our knowledge. This applies particularly to his work on endocrine tumours and abiotrophies. When the time is ripe for such a synthesis it will be found that much of the material has been provided by Parkes Weber. Nor has medicine exhausted his interests, which include numismatics and archaeology.

It is a striking record of what may be accomplished by a man whose ability is accompanied by perennially youthful joy in research and an insatiable thirst for knowledge. We believe that this must have provided him with a happy life, for he radiates generous helpfulness to others. He has received many honours, including the Moxon Gold Medal from the Royal College of Physicians, and, having become the Nestor of medicine, is secure in the affectionate admiration of his colleagues.