BOOK REVIEWS


The second edition of this well-known textbook comes well up to the high standard set by the first. The editor is to be congratulated again on the choice of his 26 contributors, for they include such authorities as Lord Horder and Dr. E. G. L. Bywaters who write on rheumatic fever, Sir Henry Cohen who writes two most stimulating chapters on gout and the rarer arthropathies, Sir Stanley Davidson and Dr. J. J. R. Dhuihe on rheumatoid arthritis, and Professor J. H. Kellgren on psoriasis, to mention only a few. A work of multiple authorship of this kind is bound to show certain irregularities, and different sections are bound to overlap to some extent, but on the whole the balance is very well preserved and the work is extremely even. Professor D. V. Davies has a chapter on anatomy and physiology of the joints, Dr. L. G. C. Pugh on physical environment and rheumatic disease, Dr. Bernard Schlesinger on Still’s disease, Sir Reginald Watson-Jones and Mr. Osmond-Clarke on orthopaedic treatment—each aspect is covered very adequately by a well-recognized authority on his subject.

Only few criticisms can be made. A chapter on the so-called “para-rheumatic” disorders (disseminated lupus erythematosus, scleroderma, polyarteritis nodosa) could conveniently be considered for the next edition, for Dr. Oswald Savage, in an excellent chapter on the adrenal hormones, is the only author to discuss them in any detail. References to important written work in this expanding and active field of medicine should be given at the end of every chapter and not only after some, for the serious student of the subject, having sipped, might perhaps often wish to drink deeper; it would also make for a more even work if a common practice obtained throughout the book.

The second edition of this book is dedicated, by permission, as was the first, to H.R.H. the Duke of Gloucester, K.G., F.R.S., President of the Empire Rheumatism Council. It is fully worthy of this honour.

F. Dudley Hart.


This small book is written for the patient suffering from rheumatic disease. It is packed with sound advice and authoritative statements on the value of different forms of treatment. The rheumatic diseases are discussed in turn and placed in sensible perspective which should clear up for the layman certain misunderstood features of “rheumatism”. It is pointed out that “fibrositis” is still a convenient term for a number of conditions of unknown causation. The various other names used to designate localized soft-tissue pain are explained and discussed with different forms of suitable treatment.

The “slipped disk” in its various locations is explained and the treatment for mild and severe cases is outlined.

There are excellent chapters on both osteo-arthritis and rheumatoid arthritis, outlining the difference between the two conditions and explaining why the treatment is not the same for both. The importance of the role of exercises as the main part of physiotherapy in each condition is emphasized.

A chapter on the value and scope of appliances for the disabled rheumatic patient is a most useful feature.

Dr. Copeman and Mason are to be congratulated on the production of a really helpful book which can be recommended with certainty to rheumatic patients.

Oswald Savage.


This slim and comprehensive volume of just over 100 pages is based on a personal experience of 3,000 cases of sciatica. An historical survey is followed by a chapter on symptomatology and one on causation in which the discogenic theory is fully upheld. Chapters on treatment largely conform to current British practice, though with some divergences; firm beds, fracture-boards, and forms of heat are condemned, but applications of ice are commended; epidural injections of procaine (lately supplanted by hydrocortisone) are more frequently used than in Great Britain and so is deep x-ray therapy. The last is used for the more chronic type of case and the series of treatments, applied to the lumbar region and the affected limb, may total up to 2,000 r in males and post-menopausal females; in young women, however, irradiation is confined to the lower limb as the sympathy of the French Courts of Law is apt to favour uninhibited ovarian function.

The book is provided with a list of 114 references and an index, yet, strangely, since it is so complete in many ways, it lacks a single diagram or x-ray photograph.

David Preiskel.


The American Heart Association have performed a signal service to cardiology by making available once more this classic monograph in facsimile. The reproduction is most carefully done and of the highest standard.

The original 1936 edition is available in all important medical libraries, but the book has long been out of print: with the reawakening of interest in this field, many will be grateful to be able to obtain Maude Abbott’s Atlas for their own shelves, since it is one that repays close and repeated study.