BOOK REVIEWS

Techniques in Physiotherapy. Edited by F. L. Greenhill, S.R.N. 1948. Hodder and Stoughton, Ltd., London. Pp. 222, illustrated. Price 12s. 6d.

This textbook, edited by Miss F. L. Greenhill, S.R.N., assisted by Dr. C. B. Heald, Mr. Barron, and Mr. Colson, is well written and of real practical value for it contains much recent information generally found only in books on special subjects. The first twenty-six pages are devoted to rheumatism and allied diseases, illustrated by two plates. The caption on Plate II might be altered with advantage. Two particularly interesting chapters are on physiotherapy in the treatment of chest conditions, and on the diagnosis and treatment of some nerve conditions; this last contains a short reference to electromyography. Another very useful chapter deals with some specialized methods of physiotherapy. There are also chapters on suspension therapy, based on the work of Miss Guthrie-Smith, on occupational therapy, and on exercises for abdominal conditions. All are illustrated by helpful diagrams in the text. The exact technique of each treatment is fully described, the descriptions being preceded by a short clinical account of the condition in order to explain the aims of the particular form of physiotherapy advocated.

The last chapter deals with medical practitioners and physiotherapy. In this chapter Miss Greenhill rightly points out that the majority of practitioners had no undergraduate teaching in physiotherapy and this makes it difficult for full collaboration between physiotherapists and doctors. The chapter contains a description of the direct current, induced currents, etc., commonplace to those with technical training but very useful to those who have long forgotten much of their pre-medical knowledge of physics.

This textbook fills a real want, and it will not only be of practical value to physiotherapists and doctors taking the final examination of D.P.M., but it should also be in the hands of every physician who is interested in the subject.

J. BARNES BURT.

Osteo-Arthritis of the Hip-Joint. By H. Warren Crowe. 1948. London: The Rolls House Publishing Co. Pp. 70. Price 35s. 6d.

In this monograph Dr. Warren Crowe records his views on osteo-arthritis of the hip with reference to five hundred cases. Believing that in many patients its progress can be arrested by appropriate treatment,

he rightly deplores the defeatist attitude often manifested to the condition. Since he considers low-grade infection plays a part in the development of the osteo-arthritis hip, he is led to use vaccine therapy as well as the more standard measures. A stock polyvalent brew, combined at times with an autogenous addition, is employed in extremely small doses, and is claimed to be effective in a high proportion of cases. Irrespective of the questionable value of vaccines in general, the evidence adduced by the author for infection in this condition is not very convincing, and is at variance with current opinion. Other therapeutic measures recommended are intra-articular injection of acid potassium phosphate and the infiltration of painful muscles with procaine.

The book is profusely illustrated with serial x-ray reproductions, some of which, however, require the eye of faith to see the arrest claimed by the author. The format is attractive, and there is a felicitous quotation from Genesis on the title page.

G. R. FEARNLEY.

Infra-red Irradiation. By William Beaumont. 1948: third edition. London: H. K. Lewis and Co. Pp. xii plus 162, with 32 illustrations. Price 8s. 6d.

This is a beautifully produced and well-illustrated book and it will fit easily into the pocket. The first chapter, on terminology, and the second and third, on the physical and physiological basis of irradiation, are extremely clear and well set out, and will merit the attention of all those interested in physical treatment. They give the clearest possible exposition of the subject. The well illustrated chapter on apparatus will prove useful to many.

The second half, dealing with the clinical aspect—the treatment of common symptoms, application to disease and record of cases—is, however, not of the same standard. To describe the treatment of pain in the shoulder, pain in the knee, painful elbow, etc., as undiagnosed separate entities, seems unworthy, and the brief descriptions of diseases are even misleading. To call fibrositis simply an inflammation, with a quotation from the *British Medical Journal* of 1923, is unfortunate, and such statements as, "Infra-red irradiation invariably gives uniformly satisfactory results in so-called rheumatic fibrositis", are sweeping in the extreme; the implication that heat is the main treatment for rheumatoid arthritis is really dangerous. It is a great pity that such an excellent beginning should be marred by such an indifferent clinical exposition.

G. D. KERSLEY.

NEWS ITEMS

The Danish League against Rheumatism

We have received a summary of the work of the Danish League against Rheumatism for the years 1946 to 1948. The Danish League consists of medical and social sections and has a membership of 173,000 out of a total population of four million. The financial resources are obtained through membership fees and through a "Rheumatism Day" collection held once a year. Financial aid is

given for the treatment of patients and to pay for research, and the League has influenced the Government to provide better social facilities for patients with certain rheumatic diseases, namely rheumatoid arthritis and rheumatic fever. It is expected that this will be followed by the foundation of rheumatism departments in hospitals and sanatoria. Financial aid has been given to research work on many aspects, of the rheumatic diseases