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**EDITORIAL**

AS industry becomes more mechanized, we find the machine enroaching into every walk of life. Housewives use washing machines, polishing machines, beating machines, sweeping machines; office workers use type-writing machines, accounting machines, duplicating machines and in medicine, machines of many varied types are being used for diagnostic and treatment purposes.

These are all very valuable and serve a very important part in our lives, but we must not forget how to use our own most valuable tools, our hands. On the badge of the Chartered Society of Physiotherapy are two hands indicating the significant part played by these in this branch of medicine.

In the early days massage was the all important factor and the term Physiotherapy was unknown. We would all have been masseuses or masseurs relying almost entirely on our own skilled, trained hands, to bring about relief and give assistance to those in pain or suffering some physical handicap.

Gradually machines, each one more beautiful and more spectacular than the last, have crept into Physical Medicine Departments and Private Practices. We are now physiotherapists in the main, and in danger of becoming technicians in a "push-button age.

Dealing with machines makes one less tolerant, less sympathetic and even less humane, when dealing with patients. They tend to become case numbers and types and are often referred to as "the knee" or "the shoulder" or "Number 32".

The personal approach of the physiotherapist to the patient and the link which is set up between the physiotherapist and the patient, either makes the ensuing treatment successful or otherwise. Seldom do patients get relief despite themselves. It is almost always, no matter what the conditions, because of the co-operation between the physiotherapist and the patient. This cannot come about if the physiotherapist merely turns on a few knobs of a smart machine, walks away and does the same for "the shoulder" lying in the next cubicle.

Machines play a very important part in modern physiotherapy. Without them our lives would be very much more difficult, and our patients would often return home having gained no relief from pain or stiffness; muscles would waste away and many an incorrect diagnosis would be made.

We must, never the less, never expect a machine to do what can be done more adequately by our trained hands. Use machines, let them play their all-important role in modern Physiotherapy, but use them as a supplement to our hands, rather than as a replacement.