

**BOOK REVIEW**

**PHYSIOTHERAPY IN LEPROSY.** By Merrill Mendis, M.S.C.P. Published by John Wright and Sons, Ltd., Bristol, England.

This book is the result of research work undertaken by Mr. Mendis on a Fellowship from the World Health Organisation. There is a foreword by Dr. Paul Brand, who is well known as an authority on leprosy.

The first section is a concise account of the nerve involvement in leprosy, pointing out clearly those components of the paralysis which cause most functional disability. This is followed by excellent chapters on the assessment of hand deformities and the pre-operative prevention or correction of contractures by splinting, wax baths and oil massage. There is an interesting section on dynamic splinting.

The chapter on re-education of the hand following surgery is the most detailed in the book, and should be of great interest and help to physiotherapists in this country, where reconstructive surgery in leprosy is still in its early days. The operative procedure in each of the more common tendon transfers is described, followed by a very explicit account of post-operative muscle re-education, particular emphasis being laid on acquiring an effective pinch-grip. During the early stages judicious splinting is recommended to prevent post-operative development of contractures and to stabilize certain joints until the new muscle action is sufficiently re-educated to prevent imbalance. A short section at the end of the chapter deals with temporalis transfer in cases of lagophthalmos.

The remainder of the book deals with involvement of the lower limb. The section on lateral popliteal nerve paralysis deals both with the treatment of an acute foot-drop and with pre-operative treatment in a non-recovering lesion. Re-education following tibialis posterior transfer is then described and mention is made of general foot care.

The mechanism of plantar ulceration is discussed in great detail, followed by chapters on the treatment of ulceration and the construction of various types of shoes for patients with anaesthetic feet. The final sections deal with the education of patients to the precautions required in anaesthesia, and a short section on the splinting of hands involved in acute lepromatous reactions.

Diagrams throughout are abundant and very clear.

Although intensity-duration curves are recommended as routine tests in all cases of nerve involvement, no mention is made of electrical stimulation in lesions where recovery is hoped for. This should perhaps have been included since it has been proved of value, particularly in lateral popliteal nerve palsy. Omission is also made of any reference to the use of ultrasound in the treatment of the acute, painful neuritis so often found with or without paralysis, whereas Zimmerman\* has stated ultrasound

\*Zimmerman, R. N. (1961): "Ultrasonics", Seminar on Leprosy, U.S. Public Health Service Hospital, Carville.

to be more beneficial than any other modality in alleviating the symptoms of acute neuritis in leprosy, the presence of E.N.L. not being a contra-indication to its use.

This is, however, a book which should be welcomed as a handbook for the guidance of all physiotherapists concerned in the treatment and rehabilitation of leprosy patients.

**BOOKS RECEIVED**

(For Review later)

A Series of Fellowship Theses published by William Heineman, Medical Books Ltd., 23, Bedford Square, London, W.C.1, in association with the Chartered Society of Physiotherapy.

1. **Abnormal Postural Reflex Activity Caused by Brain Lesion**, by Bertha Bobath, F.C.S.P.
2. **Physiotherapy in Major Knee Surgery**, by Stella Saywell, F.C.S.P.
3. **Faulty Posture—Its Effects and Treatment**, by Molly Turner, F.C.S.P.

These monographs will be reviewed in the next issue of this *Journal* and are obtainable through Medical Distributors (Pty.) Ltd., Johannesburg and Cape Town.

**CENTRE FOR SPASTIC CHILDREN**

CHEYNE WALK, LONDON

**Post-Registration Courses for Therapists, in Cerebral Palsy**

Two six-week courses for Post-registration Physiotherapists, Occupational Therapists and Speech Therapists will be held at this Centre during 1965.

The starting dates for the courses will be Monday, January 11th, and Monday, June 14th. The course fee will be £25.

Application to attend the courses should be made, in writing, to the Superintendent, the Centre for Spastic Children, 61, Cheyne Walk, London, S.W.3.

**ASSISTANT TO HON. GENERAL**

**SECRETARY**

If any member knows of anyone who would be suitable to act as a part-time paid assistant to the Hon. General Secretary, please will they contact Mrs. Levy, P.O. Box 11151, Johannesburg. Phone 46-4649.