

Correspondence

FREE HOSPITALISATION

To the Editor, "Physiotherapy,"

In your December, 1948 editorial you quote the answer given by the Transvaal Provincial Secretary in reply to an inquiry on how the interests of physiotherapists were likely to be affected by the Transvaal Free Hospitalisation Ordinance. This reply seems to evade the point; it tells us what we already know. That "the interests of physiotherapists are not affected . . . by the Ordinance" is quite true to-day, but the inquiry dealt with how these interests were "likely to be affected," a direct reference to the future. This question remains unanswered, and the omission may suggest to some that the authorities prefer that physiotherapists should interpret their futures in the light of the fact that there is functioning to-day an Ordinance, introduced and passed with the declared object of providing all medical services free.

As medical services include physiotherapy, it seems impossible not to conclude that when the Ordinance is supplemented and amended — as further free facilities are provided — the interests of all physiotherapists will be seriously affected. Is it possible to arrive at any other conclusion?

In such circumstances, the Transvaal Provincial Secretary's reassurance, given without indicating the logical processes which led to his happy conclusion is likely to be received as wishful thinking, and interpreted as an attempt to avoid the issue raised. It is certainly not at all likely to foster that spirit of understanding and co-operation which is desirable and essential between the Provincial Administration and, in this instance, the physiotherapy profession.

Much time has passed since the Ordinance and its possible effects became a topic of major interest, but even now it is not too late for an answer to be given to that question of "the future"—with which many physiotherapists are gravely concerned.

Free Hospitalisation and all that it means is actually with us now, and resistance among physiotherapists must not be presumed. But where interests and livelihoods are affected by Provincial legislation, surely it is not asking too much that those most affected by the legislation should be afforded every assistance in formulating the shape of things to come, so that they may adjust their professional lives accordingly.

A full statement from the Transvaal Provincial Administration is therefore strongly indicated. This letter is written in the hope that you will afford the Administration both an invitation, and the space, to clarify a position which, at its best, can only be regarded as unsatisfactory and unnecessarily indefinite.

21, Pasteur Chambers, V. A. RATCLIFF,
Jeppie Street, Johannesburg. M.C.S.P.

A copy of this letter has been forwarded to the Transvaal Provincial Secretary.—Editor.

CORRECTION

To the Editor, "Physiotherapy,"

In your December, 1948 issue the report, "International Congress on Physiotherapy" contains an obvious mistake (printer's error?) which should be corrected because it can lead to confusion.

"Between the degrees of 44-45 Cent. i.e. 93.3-95 degrees Fahr." is an obvious mistake to which I am taking the liberty of drawing the attention of all readers.

Yeoville, N. FINN,
Johannesburg. Specialist Physician.

We are indebted to Dr. Finn for pointing out this error. The correct temperatures should read, "44-45 degrees Cent. i.e. 111.1-113 degrees Fahr.—Editor.

NAME OMITTED

The name of the writer of the letter which appeared on page 8 of the December issue under the title, "Exercises and the Tired Back" was omitted. The writer in question was Mr. V. Lerm, of Windhoek, South-West Africa.

WITS. UNIVERSITY NOTES

Instructional Staff.—Miss P. Crawford, from England, has replaced Miss A. Shunn as lecturer in electrotherapy.

Whilst travelling to work on 28th January, Miss J. Blair and Miss M. Limerick were involved in a nasty car accident. The former suffered four fractured ribs and a collapsed lung and the latter a fracture of the left tibial spine. Despite these injuries, both girls resumed employment within two weeks.

Miss Limerick has just announced her engagement to Mr. Jas. Levy, an electrical engineer.

Students.—Miss R. van Willick, a fourth-year student has announced her engagement to Mr. R. Ockse.

Miss J. Serfontein, a third-year student has announced her engagement to Mr. H. Edling.

Miss R. Fouche has been appointed as students' representative on the Journal Committee.

Miss M. Barker, Miss M. Goulden and Miss M. Nicol, who recently qualified, have gone on the tour of England and the Continent which was arranged by the N.U.S.A.S. organisation. The two first mentioned have decided to remain in England to gain experience in specialised branches of physiotherapy.

BOOK REVIEW.

Techniques in Physiotherapy.

By F. L. GREENHILL, Hodder & Stoughton Ltd., 1948. Price 12s. 6d. 222 pages. 37 Illustrations.

This is the latest technical book on physiotherapy. It is edited by a very experienced physiotherapist, who was assisted by various medical authorities such as C. B. Heald on rheumatism and arthritis, by J. N. Barron on burns and injuries to the hand, and by J. Colson on occupational therapy.

Generally it is a valuable addition to our literature, and will remind us of many useful but forgotten physical methods of treatment. It has little new to offer, however.

Since the contributors are of so high a standard, one tends to be critical of their views and one cannot accept all their statements at face value. Such opinions as, "An antitoxic positive ion such as zinc or silver can be applied for the purpose of decongestion and to neutralise or remove the toxins without increasing the general blood supply at depth," simply does not make sense. Unscientific statements of this sort detract somewhat from the value of the book, a work otherwise to be highly recommended.

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