

Johannesburg and one hundred and sixty from Pretoria, and the sixty miles of dirt road has so improved in the last two years that one can get to Pretoria in three hours. There is a communal car belonging to the Sisters' House which several of us share, which means that we can take it for weekends or on leave. We are allowed to accumulate public holidays and for an occasional long weekend it is possible to reach a number of places from here like Kruger Park, Loskop Dam, Swaziland, or Lourenco Marques. There is a library here that gets replenished regularly, several of us have record players, there is a tennis court, and scope for various hobbies; photography, play-readings, Scottish dancing and so on. As you can imagine, it is a question of making your own entertainment, as there is no chance of going round the corner to the bioscope! The nearest one is sixty miles away. The nurses do sometimes have a film in their Recreation Hall, but it is usually easier seen than heard, and you may be called upon to work the projector anyway, as there are a multitude of little ploys of this nature that seem to need doing! All in all, the life here is not nearly so isolated as one might expect, and for someone who has had a certain amount of experience the post of physiotherapist is an interesting one, and you certainly see a very different side to African life.

BOOK REVIEW

THE PERIPHERAL NERVOUS SYSTEM. J. P. Schadé.

Publishers: Elsevier. 1966. p.p. 230; Illus. 84; Charts 3. Price: R7.20.

This book is divided into four sections, excluding a bibliography and index.

The introductory chapter gives a brief but comprehensive discussion of recent developments in the structure of a nerve cell, including electronmicroscopic sections of nerve tissue.

Section two on the spinal nerves. The description of the nerve plexi is too generalised and lacking in detail on the courses and relations for physiotherapists. The diagrams are excellent, except that these could have occupied a whole page, to advantage, instead of leaving large blank areas. The clinical application and applied anatomy is good. An extremely short chapter on the spinal autonomic system concludes this section.

Section three on the cranial nerves is excellent, with clinical application and applied anatomy for each nerve. This section includes a short concise chapter on the cranial autonomic system. The diagrams are excellent.

Section four, the compendium, is a most useful section having diagrams on the segmental distribution of the spinal nerves, followed by charts showing the segmental motor innervation of the trunk and limbs. This, in turn, is followed by diagrams showing the possible motor points of the body, for electrical stimulation, including points where nerves are most superficial. These latter diagrams would have been much improved by the inclusion of bony landmarks. The paragraph on the ascending and descending spinal pathways is clear, concise and extremely well illustrated. The final part of the compendium gives the attachments, nerve and segmental supply, action, and where applicable, how to test the function of muscles of the body, these are arranged in alphabetical order for easy reference. Detail is again lacking in this part and there are a number of omissions of either attachments or actions.

The bibliography is extremely short, whereas the index to subject matter is very good and cross referenced.

With the book are three charts, one for each main section of the book.

Plate I.

The diagrams of the distribution of the peripheral nerves showing both motor and sensory supply is well illustrated,

but I found the numbers a little confusing initially. The diagram of the spinal cord and spinal nerves is very good.

Plate II.

The diagrams showing the formation and distribution of the cranial nerves is beautifully illustrated. The base of the skull and base of the brain showing the cranial nerves is cross referenced to show where the nerves leave the skull.

Plate III.

Shows the ascending and descending tracts of the spinal cord, in colour, at each level from sacrum to cervical, also the integration and intersegmental connections, as well as the peripheral termination. Again the diagrams are excellent.

Each of these charts can also be used as teaching aids and wall charts.

The layout of the book is unusual in that the text is confined to the left hand pages and the relative diagrams are on the right hand pages.

Like all "aids" it has its shortcomings, but as a book for revision or quick reference it is extremely good, the diagrams and plates are superb. It is intended for use by persons having a knowledge of the standard text books on the subjects covered by this book. There are omissions, for example, such as only the bony insertion of gluteus maximus is given, there is a change of colour scheme on Fig. 75, these should be obvious to readers, except possibly students. The book will make a useful addition to any medical library, and qualified physiotherapy staff may find it a handy easy reference book. Students may find difficulties, as this is not intended to replace the standard text books, and a good grounding in these are required to get the maximum benefit from this type of book.

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