

REHABILITATION TODAY

Stephen Mattingly (Ed.)

Update Publications Limited
London (1977)

181 pages. Price £5.65

Anyone, whether medical or non-medical, who wants to find out who does what, and with which, in connection with mental or physical disability has hitherto had to seek far and wide for information. Now *Rehabilitation Today* brings it all together in one volume. It describes the many government agencies and voluntary bodies available to help, some of which have special interests and responsibilities and others which have a general approach to a clinical aspect, or to an afflicted age group. The range is wide and the book gives a comprehensive account of places and institutions, with plenty of illustrations to break up the text.

Many of the resources described are highly technical, from hoists and wheelchairs to electrically powered cochlea implants, but there is a valuable chapter on the management of the disabled person in the community by his family doctor. Recognizing the possible need for rehabilitation before or after an illness is clearly the business of the family doctor and if a copy of this compendium is known to be on the practice library shelf the path of the patient to sophisticated and specialized help may be made much easier.

Books with a high information content do not always make interesting reading but *Rehabilitation Today* manages to capture the reader, even if it leaves him wondering if any single stone has been left unturned in the care of the disabled. Furthermore, the way that contributions by numerous authors have been edited has conferred on the whole book a remarkable evenness of style.

The book comprises a series of articles which originally appeared in *Update* and is obtainable only from the publishers, Update Publications Limited, who by selling direct in this way are able to hold the price down to the purchaser.

R. J. F. H. PINSENT

INJURIES IN SPORT

D. S. Muckle

John Wright and Sons Limited
UK (1978)

131 pages. Price £6.50

In his introduction the author states that this book is intended to be a guide to the

accident department and general practice. This is a sound intention since most of the estimated annual total of two million sports injuries in this country are likely to be seen first by a doctor in one or other of these branches of the profession.

The chapter on immediate care contains much sound advice together with a list of medical equipment required in the first-aid treatment of athletes, which is useful if somewhat overexhaustive (for example, wax baths and antidiarrhoeal medicines). The importance of making policy on injuries clear before the event is rightly stressed but should have included in club sports liaison with the trainer, some of whose ministrations can be a positive disadvantage to the injured player. In particular the use of the PR spray can make accurate diagnosis, especially of joint injuries, impossible until its effects have worn off.

The succeeding chapters set out in a clear and logical way the common mechanisms of injuries in various sites and structures, giving their treatment. However, some sections on treatment suffer from too much operative detail for the majority of the intended audience. The space could have been used to better advantage in giving more advice on procedures which can be carried out in the surgery, such as the technique and dosage of local steroid injections.

This is a useful book for doctors working in accident departments and for general practitioners with a particular interest in the subject. Others, however, may feel that at £6.50 for a compact volume of 124 pages it is rather expensive.

J. R. EDWARDS

DAVIDSON'S PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICE OF MEDICINE 12TH EDITION

John Macleod (Ed.)

Churchill Livingstone
Edinburgh (1977)

978 pages. Price £6.50

Among the standard textbooks of medicine Davidson's is one of the best known and most widely read. Its international reputation and translation into several different languages is evidence of its continuing success.

The twelfth edition has just been published and includes for the first time in recent years what used to be a separate tropical diseases supple-

ment. The editor is Dr John Macleod from Edinburgh, supported by a distinguished Scottish team.

Although I have used this book for many years and it has always been my own first choice of basic medical texts, I was slightly disappointed with this edition. Although many of the diseases are clearly described the balance of priorities does not always match those in general practice, although there are frequent references to the role of the general practitioner. Less than two pages are devoted to depressive illness, with most of this devoted to the severe, withdrawn, endogenous depressive patient and not enough to the pattern of presentation in general practice or to the general practice management.

Some of the statements seem dogmatic. When discussing treatment for duodenal ulcer, for example, which in my practice has a radiologically confirmed prevalence of over one per cent of the population, the authors refer to rest: "This may be undertaken at home under the care of the family doctor or more effectively in hospital; undoubtedly rest in hospital confers additional benefit, possibly because of the release from domestic and business worries". The implication seems to be that bed rest in hospital is desirable, although an earlier paragraph on the same page makes the point that hospital admission cannot be offered to all patients with an active ulcer. In their discussion of urinary tract infections, under the heading "Investigation", the authors state: "Cytoscopy should be postponed until the acute condition has subsided". Not all general practitioners would agree that every case of urinary tract infection requires cytoscopy, which this seems to imply.

The chapter on acute poisoning is a welcome addition and the dramatic figure on its first page showing the increased incidence of overdoses is most effective. However, the table on page 799 shows that the vast majority of patients between the ages of 20 and 29 taking overdoses are alleged to be male; virtually all other surveys report a female predominance in this age group and presumably the caption is wrong.

It is pleasing that the field of medicine is covered, including tropical diseases, in under 1,000 pages but I found the type presentation of this edition less attractive and easy to read than some of its predecessors.

It looks as if the time has come when the next edition should include a general practitioner clinician among the authors if 'Davidson' is to maintain its leading position among the textbooks of medicine.

D. J. PEREIRA GRAY