

connected with East Grinstead will find the lists of names, the entries concerning quite minor characters, and the sometimes jumbling together of the important with the trivial to be rather irritating but, as the author says, this is a book which had to be written and he has done a service not only to his hospital but to the general history of hospitals of this country.

The Recovery from Poliomyelitis—A Study of the Convalescent Phase.

MARTIN SINGER, M.B., CH.B., F.R.C.S. and PETER ROSE-INNES, M.B., CH.B. Edinburgh and London. E. & S. Livingstone Ltd. 1963. Pp. vi + 106. Price 25s.

This monograph deals with the care of the patient affected by poliomyelitis from the end of the acute phase (approximately three weeks after onset), until maximal recovery. The authors describe the planning and practice of a regime of treatment and the results achieved by this in the 1957 epidemic in Cape Town, when 163 patients were treated in their unit.

Although it is to be hoped that poliomyelitis is a vanishing disease, cases still occur, and this work should prove a valuable source of reference to all concerned in any way with their management. The style is readable throughout and the numerous photographic illustrations are of high quality.

Smallpox 1961-62. Ministry of Health Reports on Public Health and Medical Subjects, No. 109. London. H.M. Stationery Office. 5s.

In this grey book of 70 pages is a detailed account of the importation of smallpox into this country in December 1961, and of the way in which the disease spread, was recognized, and finally controlled. In all there were 62 patients who developed the infection, and 25 died. The incubation period was between 9 and 14 days. The protective action of vaccination was clearly confirmed.

Some embarrassment arose from the huge public demand for vaccination in areas where there was no disease, but the supplies of lymph were never in danger of exhaustion. Five and a half million doses were given out during six weeks. Such delays in distribution as occurred were to meet "inessential demands in a few localities". There was much morbidity needlessly caused by vaccination of numerous people who had not been in contact with cases of the disease.

The medical officer of health of the area in which a case came to light proved to be the pivot around which the control of the infection revolved. He was the primary source of authentic information and the one responsible for liaison with neighbouring authorities. The help he got from various authorities concerned varied from place to place.

Some problems arose through the opening of a number of first line smallpox hospitals simultaneously, and disinfection was sometimes complicated.

The book gives a fascinating account of the epidemic from start to finish, and should be read by all those likely to be involved by a re-importation of the disease, in other words, everybody.