

BOOK REVIEWS

Contemporary Rheumatology. Proceedings of the Third European Rheumatology Congress, The Hague-Scheveningen, 1955. Edited by J. Goslings and H. Van Swaay. 1956. Elsevier Publishing Company, Amsterdam; Cleaver-Hume Press, London. (95s.)

This is a record of the proceedings of the third European Rheumatology Congress held at The Hague in 1955, edited, under the auspices of the Congress committee, by Professor J. Goslings and Dr. Van Swaay. It is a valuable compilation, handsomely produced on paper good enough for microphotographic reproductions, and the authors are to be congratulated on the successful conclusion of one of the most difficult of publishing jobs.

Each contribution has a summary in another of the four languages used in the Congress, as well as references and discussion, if any. There is an author and subject index. The material is arranged under the main headings of rheumatic fever, connective tissue, disk degeneration and osteo-arthritis of the spine, rheumatism and social medicine, and other subjects, including rheumatoid arthritis, ankylosing spondylitis, and gout. It would be invidious to mention individual contributions but, even for those who attended the Congress, which was run on a multiple presentation basis, there are many articles which will be found well worth reading.

E. G. L. BYWATERS.

Connaissance élémentaire du rhumatisme. By S. de Sèze and M. Maitre. 1956. Pp. 273, 311 figs. Expansion Scientifique Française, Paris. (2,800 Fr. frs; £3.)

This admirable book is primarily intended for the medical student but contains information of a more advanced nature than is suggested by its modest title. The style is clear, unambiguous, and often justifiably dogmatic. For instance, any "woolly" ideas on "lumbago" are soon dissipated by the statement that "... le mal aux reins n'est pas un rhumatisme vertébral, le lumbago n'est pas un rhumatisme musculaire, la sciaticque n'est pas une névrite rhumatismale". The reader is then introduced to the intervertebral disk and everything connected with it. Information is largely imparted by means of diagrams, X-ray films, and strip-cartoons, and at the end of the chapter the reader is left with the feeling that he has mastered the subject. The chapter on peri-arthritis of the shoulder is equally satisfying.

The forthright style and absence of "padding" all combine to give the impression that the author knows exactly where he is going. As in all textbooks, however, there is a tendency to introduce time-honoured but often outworn notions. For example, has anyone found in

practice that prolonged cortisone administration causes adrenal atrophy? Is massage really necessary in rheumatoid arthritis to maintain muscle tone and prevent atrophy? Is it necessary for a mud-pack to be radioactive? Is teno-vaginitis of the adductor longus pollicis ever cured by splinting alone? And is stellate-ganglion block so beneficial in the "frozen shoulder"? On the other hand, few would quarrel with the statement that phenylbutazone, if tolerated, is the drug of choice in ankylosing spondylitis, or that patellectomy should be performed more frequently in certain forms of osteo-arthritis of the knees; the observation that cortisone relieves the pain of myelomatosis better than any other known form of treatment is of great interest.

The book is well produced and adequately, indeed, brilliantly, illustrated. But if this wealth of material is intended for first, second, and third year French medical students, as suggested by the publishers, then it must be a sobering experience to be brought face to face with a textbook designed for French rheumatologists.

DAVID PREISKEL.

Textbook of Orthopaedic Medicine. Volume I, Diagnosis of Soft Tissue Lesions. By James Cyriax. Third edition, 1957. Pp. 711, 36 pl., 131 figs. Cassell, London. (45s.)

That this work should come to a third edition is a testimony to the enthusiasm of Dr. Cyriax. When we reviewed the second edition we hoped that by better organization and condensation its size could have been reduced and its worth improved. The book still resembles a mid-Victorian medical diatribe, in which there is an advocacy of a particular brand of physical medicine misnamed "orthopaedic". Indeed, diagnosis is also a misnomer for there is only a very narrow, though wordy, discussion of the skeletal and associated disorders. In order to make remarkable claims for his own opinions and methods the author not infrequently attributes some astonishing views to the "authorities" whom he wishes to depreciate. In the same way, and for the same reason, he very naturally discards older medical teaching which recent inquiry has modified. Nevertheless, much modern work is accepted and quoted and, although a few names are given, there is no bibliography. For a student or general practitioner who is desirous of obtaining guidance from the physician's viewpoint and who realizes that consideration of the locomotor system cannot be divorced from the rest of general medicine the present work will prove disappointing.

NORMAN CAPENER.

NEW YORK RHEUMATISM ASSOCIATION

At the Annual Meeting of the New York Rheumatism Association held on April 9, 1957, at Cornell University, the following officers were elected:

President: Dr. Richard H. Freyberg
Vice-President: Dr. Leon L. Weisal
Secretary-Treasurer: Dr. Felix E. Demartini

Executive Committee: Dr. William H. Kammerer
Dr. Charles M. Plotz
Dr. Morris Ziff
Dr. Charles Ragan
Dr. Robert L. Preston
Dr. Robert M. Lintz
Dr. Janet G. Travell