



SIR LUDWIG GUTTMANN, C.B.E.

SIR LUDWIG GUTTMANN

LUDWIG GUTTMANN came to this country 30 years ago, already a distinguished neurologist and an experienced director of a unit. He has done here work almost without parallel in recent British medical history by a combination of medical skill, human understanding and unequalled pertinacity.

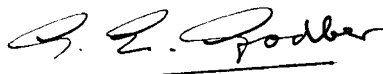
Guttman's interest in paraplegia goes back to his earliest years—even before qualification. He was working on such unconsidered but desperate problems as the management of bedsores very early in his medical career in Germany. He went to Stoke Mandeville, where his true lifework has been accomplished, in 1944 to establish the unit for Spinal Injuries which has grown to be the inspiration of work for paraplegics the world over.

The technical medical problems of paraplegia are not simply those of neurology. They start in most cases with the complications of severe trauma and they extend to involve not only the orthopaedic surgeon and the radiologist but also the urologist, the bacteriologist, the specialist in physical medicine and the general physician. If 'medicine' embraces the supplementary professions, then nursing, physiotherapy and occupational therapy certainly carry the greater part of the load.

Guttman brought to a problem previously regarded as virtually hopeless not only his technical skill but a fierce determination to change that judgment. He was able to give his vision to others and to organise at Stoke Mandeville the team of doctors, nurses and physiotherapists which first demonstrated how much could be done. He both concerned himself with every detail and enabled others to give freely their own expert contribution. He made a team work and he made the patients see it could. He rescued literally thousands from despair and early death—not only at Stoke but wherever the treatment of paraplegia has since been organised.

The Stoke Mandeville Games, which are probably the feature of Guttman's work best known to the public, are really only a by-product of an essentially 'medical' achievement. They do represent a major contribution to rehabilitation of body and spirit and their origin was inspired. They have rightly been acclaimed all over the world; but they are only the tip of the iceberg. The real achievement is in the unit itself.

I have been privileged to know and work with Ludwig for over 20 years. No man with his drive and purpose could or should be a comfortable colleague for an administrator. He should always want to get more—and does. But his humanity, his kindness and the magnitude of his achievement have made it a privileged association. I am glad indeed that this number of the journal *Paraplegia* is a testimony to him and I am grateful for the opportunity to add my own.



SIR GEORGE E. GODBER
K.C.B., D.M., F.R.C.P.
*Chief Medical Officer,
Ministry of Health, London*