

## BOOK REVIEW

**Psychological and Behavioural Aspects of Physical Disability.** Edited by James E. Lindemann. Published by Plenum Press, New York and London, 1981, 426 pp, \$24.50

The editor is Professor of Medical Psychology and Director of Clinical Training in Psychology of the Crippled Children's Division of the Oregon Health Sciences University, Portland, Oregon. He provides the introductory chapter on 'General considerations for evaluating and counselling the physically handicapped'. The subsequent 13 chapters are organised on a standard sequence of a brief outline of the physical disability, common psychological characteristics and problems, evaluation, intervention methods, trends and needs, sources of information, and references, on the topics of Haemophilia, Diabetes Mellitus, Other Genetic Disorders, Cerebral Palsy, Epilepsy, Mental Retardation, Spinal Cord Injury, Myelomeningocele (Spina Bifida), Progressive Muscle Disorders, Congenital Heart Defects, Coronary Heart Disease, Visual Handicaps, and Hearing Disorders. This information comes from five Professors and an Associate Professor of Medical (*i.e.* Clinical, in U.K. terms) Psychology, a Professor and Associate Professor of Paediatrics, a State Coordinator of Education, and a Professor of Audiology in Paediatrics. The choice of topics appears rather arbitrary, in some overlapping, and their number necessarily reduces the scope and depth of their treatment in a book of this size, *e.g.* Spinal Cord Injury and Myelomeningocele together received 53 pages. It does not aim to cater for the specific interests of readers of 'Paraplegia', but is rather a primer for students attending courses related to clinical psychology, social work, special education etc. in the U.S.A., with no background of medical knowledge.

The introductory chapter and psychological comments in the various sections would, however, be valuable to the medical clinician interested in the view-points and procedures of the clinical psychologists whose assistance he might seek, and are evidently based on mature practical experience.

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**Spinal Degenerative Disease.** By R. S. Maurice-Williams, M.A., M.R.C.P., F.R.C.S. 1981. John Wright and Sons Ltd., Bristol, England. £16.00 341 pp.

It is likely that the commonest cause of serious spinal neurological disability results from spinal degenerative disease, and the author of this beautifully produced well written book is a clinical neurosurgeon who obviously sees selected patients, but appreciates that such disease is of real interest to many medical doctors and allied hospital specialists. These include, in addition to neurosurgeons, orthopaedic surgeons, medical neurologists, and specialists in spinal paralysis in all its many aspects.

Without discussing new research, or entering into controversies of novel theories, the whole subject is discussed in a comprehensive compact way, with full use of 518 references. The history, and briefly—the anatomical, physiological and pathological aspects are outlined. The investigation, management and prognosis of cervical, dorsal, and lumbar spinal degenerative disorders are given in a clear well thought out way, and include several illustrative case reports. The author considers that the association of cervical spondylosis (which is almost part of the 'normal ageing process') and myelopathy may be a co-incidental one. He does not specify the various clinical myelopathic syndromes that may occur, in relation to the possible beneficial effects of therapy. Progressive cervical myelopathy usually requires operative treatment, and the reasons for preferring an anterior operation in certain patients, and a posterior decompression in others are carefully discussed. The possibility, and value of both approaches being used in the same patient with severe cervical spinal stenosis causing myelopathy, by two, stage operations is not mentioned.

The chapters on dorsal, and on lumbar degenerative diseases are also excellent, with a good section on lumbar spinal stenosis, and concluding with a useful final chapter on 'psychological aspects of low back pain'.

Some factual information concerning the author's own personal experiences would have been of value, to support his careful study of spinal degenerative disease.

This book is strongly recommended to all doctors and allied health personnel working in the field of spinal paralysis.

PHILLIP HARRIS

**Spinal Cord Injury—Guidelines for Facility Categorisation and Standards of Care.** American Spinal Injury Association, 250 East Superior Street, Room 619, Chicago, Illinois, 60611, U.S.A.; 20 pages; \$10.

This small but very useful and informative booklet can be highly recommended for all doctors concerned with the care of spinal cord injury patients. It mainly pertains to the spinal cord injury 'scene' in the U.S.A.

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