

# RES MEDICA

Journal of the Royal Medical Society



## Book Review

### Abstract

CLINICAL CHEMISTRY IN PRACTICAL MEDICINE

By C. P. Stewart and D. M. Dunlop. Fifth edition, 1958. E. & S. Livingstone Ltd., 27s 6d.

To the casual observer, this new edition would seem to differ from its predecessors only in a somewhat more logical order, an additional 22 pages and an increase in price. Closer examination reveals, however, that a far more extensive revision has been undertaken, and that as many sections, notably the gastric and renal tests, have been reduced, the amount of new material included is greater than the additional pages might suggest. Large increases are to be found in those sections devoted to water and electrolyte balance, to the steroid hormones, and to the metabolic abnormalities, while the accounts of such subjects as electrophoretic fractionation, the histamine stimulation of gastric function and the intravenous glucose tolerance curves are much expanded.

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ISSN: 2051-7580 (Online) ISSN: 0482-3206 (Print)

Res Medica is published by the Royal Medical Society, 5/5 Bristo Square, Edinburgh, EH8 9AL

Res Medica, Autumn 1958, 1(3): 28

[doi:10.2218/resmedica.v1i3.323](https://doi.org/10.2218/resmedica.v1i3.323)

After the full extent of the paralysis becomes evident, the value of bed rest is slight. Muscle recovery takes place for at least six months, and this recovery is believed to be a hypertrophy and increased efficiency of the non-affected muscle fibres.

All the time, the patient must be led along, perhaps at times driven, by the physiotherapist, the doctor, the orthopaedic surgeon, and by his family and friends, all of whom have their part to play. The psychological make-up of the patient needs as much attention as the physical state.

Education of the patient is very important, for with the defect in "brawn," "brain" becomes of even greater importance; the prolonged treatment of hopeless muscles should be avoided, if it is going to interfere with much more important matters concerning the patient's future.

Much is now known about poliomyelitis, but there is still a great deal to be learned before we can feel we know all about it. It will always be one of the most fascinating conditions a doctor can meet.

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In the methods appendix there have also been extensive changes, much of the more recondite material having been replaced by more modern and more simple alternatives. Of especial interest is the appearance of the Clinitest, Ictotest and other similar proprietary methods now fully established, and the inclusion of paper chromatography for the identification of specific sugars.

This is a book of which one's seniors speak well, and to one about to embark upon his clinical work there can be little doubt that this new edition is a most desirable pre-requisite.