

PREFACE

DURING the past eight years approximately 750 articles, books and other publications have appeared, dealing with short-wave diathermy, the majority of these being in foreign languages. It is only within very recent years that investigators in the United States, although the first in the field, have set themselves the task of studying short-wave currents in their experimental and therapeutic application, and of analyzing the reports coming from abroad, as well as of verifying the findings reported. It must be admitted that since the start was made, the results have been creditable.

There is little question of the value of short waves as a therapeutic agent in some pathological conditions, although their efficacy in others is still a matter of controversy, and subject to further study and development. Many, perhaps exaggerated, claims have been made as to the therapeutic value of short-waves, some by the ubiquitous overenthusiastic practitioner, but most, unfortunately, by manufacturers and salesmen of short-wave apparatus, these only serving to throw what will eventually emerge as an invaluable aid in therapy, into temporary disrepute. Such indiscriminating enthusiasm is to be deplored in any field of endeavor, but particularly so where the fate of human health and well-being is at issue. Advances in science are not made by uncontrolled rush of emotion, but by balanced reason conjoined with experience. At the same time, what is radical today may be conservative tomorrow. What is needed now is a tolerant attitude toward those who are laboring to bring this most significant of contributions to physical therapy out of the mists of uncertainty, through which all new things pass, into the clarity of scientific exactitude.

It is my hope that in offering to the medical profession this outline of the subject in its present state of development, with the survey of the laboratory and clinical work that have so far been carried out, a dual purpose will be served: that the book in itself will be of service to the profession, proving useful as a

guide to the application of short-wave diathermy; and that it will also serve as a stimulus to the further study which is so badly needed. There is no evading the fact that short waves are proving the most significant contribution of recent times to the application of electricity in medical treatment.

I take pleasure in expressing my deep gratitude to Dr. Hermann Fischer for affording me liberal opportunity to pursue this study, on ample clinical material. My thanks go to Dr. Francis Carter Wood for the use of the Crocker Research Laboratory for experimental work, and to Drs. H. M. Marvin, Walter S. Galland, Erich Schwarzkopf, and H. W. Kohler for their criticism and helpful comment. I am especially happy to acknowledge my indebtedness to Dr. László Telkes, who was kind enough to help me with the collection of this material. Finally, I wish to express my appreciation of the editorial assistance rendered me by Miss Lucile Grebenc in the preparation of this work for the press.

TIBOR DE CHOLNOKY

NEW YORK CITY
January 2, 1937