BOOK REVIEWS


This new edition of Professor Ellis's well-known book is published six years after the previous edition and much of the material is new. Part I covers normal development from conception to maturity. Part II is entitled 'Social Aspects of Child Health' and includes chapters on the various child health services, education and juvenile courts. Normal biological values and legislation concerning children are the subjects of two appendices.

The editor has assembled a team of 16 experts from widely differing fields to assist him in this work. Such names as Mildred Creak, Professor F. A. E. Crew, Professor Robert Cruickshank, Anna Freud and Eileen Younghusband indicate the eminence of the contributors and the diversity of their subjects.

The two parts of the book are equal in length. Normal development is dealt with in some detail in Part I, and to some extent this section overlaps other paediatric works of a general or special nature. Readers whose interest lies mainly in the social aspects of child health might well consider that Part II, which embraces this enormous field, could have been expanded at the expense of Part I. The appendix on normal values of body substances is informative, but are the 11 pages of text, a table of weights and measures, and 58 references really necessary in a work of this type? The bibliographies and references at the end of each chapter are all extensive, in some instances unnecessarily so. The chapter on the newborn, for example, has almost 100 references!

The publishers have excelled themselves in the standard of production. Paper, printing, layout, photographs are of the highest quality. This book is good value for money—definitely a best buy!


Of the liveborn children who die before reaching adolescence, more than half die within the first week of life. Some of those who survive serious illness in the early days of life are subsequently found to have sustained brain damage, but it is more important that most newborn infants surviving serious illness do so unscathed. Neonatal paediatrics has therefore much to offer in the prevention of death and disability in childhood.

Until the publication of Dr. Schaffer's book the paediatrician has had no good written guide to the care of the newborn, and even this work cannot be recommended unreservedly.

The strength of the book lies on its comprehensiveness. Its many illustrations and its useful references to the literature; its weakness lies in a certain lack of authority, which is apparent despite illustrative case histories and other evidence of the author's personal experience. Phrases such as 'Some advocate ...; others prefer ...' are all very well, but in many instances one seeks in vain for the author's personal opinions.

It could rightly be argued that dogmatism is not called for in the relatively unexplored field of neonatal paediatrics, but dogmatism there is, combined with a lack of those tips and wrinkles that indicate profound knowledge of a subject.

That extreme rarities are dealt with at length is welcome, but commonplace events receive too little detailed attention. Even the lengthy appendices on resuscitation and replacement transfusion omit certain details that are of great importance in practice.

The 114 chapters in the book are arranged in sections relating to bodily systems, with separate sections on Jaundice, Infections and Disorders of Nutrition. One section, that on Neonatal Cardiology, has been written by a colleague, Dr. Milton Markowitz.

In spite of its limitations, this is the best book on neonatal paediatrics now available; it is soundly based, and one can anticipate great improvements in subsequent editions.


The authors define Juvenile Rheumatoid Arthritis as a diffuse systemic disease whose clinical manifestations happen to be mainly musculo-articular and they set out to describe the various aspects of the disease as met with in the study of 110 children who attended a University Medical Centre during the period 1928-1956 and in whom the disease was sufficiently well established to fit into a clearly-defined pattern.

A description is given of the various aspects, including aetiology, pathology, differential diagnosis and treatment,
and a large part of the book is devoted to a detailed radiological description of the joints and tissues involved. Some interesting facts emerge from their survey concerning the family backgrounds of the parents suggestive of the possibility of an increased tendency to psychosomatic disease. Treatment is fully discussed and stress is laid on the dangers of too rigid fixation of joints and on the possible aggravation of the disease by failure of the parents to appreciate its emotional aspects.

In the interesting historical survey at the commencement of the book due credit is given to the late Sir Frederick Still for his monumental work in providing the first clear clinical description of the disease.

It is perhaps unfortunate that the authors in using fairly strict criteria of diagnosis give little impression of the true incidence of the disease as met with today in the United States or elsewhere as one feels that many minor cases must occur, which subside before developing the major striking stigmata, but nevertheless might be indicative of the gradually lessening severity of the illness.

In such a retrospective survey it is difficult to assess the true value of the various serological tests commonly used as diagnostic aids as so much depends on the time when they were made in the course of the disease.


This book is an account of a study under the Chairmanship of Professor J. L. Henderson of cerebral palsy in the Eastern Region of Scotland undertaken by the Scottish Council for the Care of Spastics with the help of the Advisory Committee on Medical Research (Scotland) and the Department of Child Health in the University of St. Andrews.

The Region comprises the cities of Dundee and Perth and the counties of Angus, Perth and Kinross, and has a population of 410,000, half of which is urban.

The survey discovered 240 cases of cerebral palsy under the age of 21 years. These are subjected to detailed medical, social and psychological analysis. Part I briefly describes the methods of the survey and discusses the prevalence and social distribution of cerebral palsy. Parts II and III deal in considerable detail with the medical, neurological and orthopaedic aspects, and Part IV discusses the social and psychological aspects of cerebral palsy, comparing and contrasting their findings with those of other similar surveys in the United Kingdom and abroad. Part V discusses rather briefly some aetiological considerations. This bald statement of contents does little justice to the workmanlike analysis of the survey that has been produced by Professor Henderson and his colleagues.

In the sixth and final part, Professor Henderson draws conclusions and makes recommendations. They may seem brief and unspectacular, but they are sensible and imaginative, and Professor Henderson outlines a plan for a cerebral palsy centre that, if adopted, would result in great improvements in the care of spastic children and render possible the close integration of at least some of these children into the communities as they grow up into adult life. Professor Henderson points out that the care of spastics is following a general pattern of initiation and development by voluntary services, through to takeover and integration into the statutory services when their value has been proved beyond all doubt. He suggests that such a trend is desirable provided always that the high standards of habilitation set up by voluntary services are maintained and enhanced, and that the temptation to make the patients fit rigidly into services already provided for other forms of handicap is resisted. His final words are that 'statutory services without workers especially trained in cerebral palsy habilitation, and without the special facilities needed in this field, would not be satisfactory'.


An electroencephalogram is as difficult to describe as a face and there is therefore something to be said for a portrait gallery of recordings as a guide for the interpreter with insufficient personal experience to make unaided judgments. This little book mainly consists of 101 full-page illustrations of ten-second strips of eight channel electroencephalograms of children ranging from 1 month to 14 years of age. For each age there are samples of the E.E.G. when the child is awake, asleep and waking up.

The difficulty in preparing such a book lies in extracting from a record lasting many minutes, a 10-second strip which is typical of the whole, and this difficulty is enhanced in a study of the EEG in childhood, since the older the subject the more does the appearance of the EEG vary from minute to minute.

An author may be tempted to choose for illustration a strip which is free from artefact. Dr. Foix does not appear to have succumbed to this temptation, because interference due to movement, muscular activity, the electrocardiogram and even, occasionally, mains voltage are not infrequently evident. Moreover, it is curious that in nearly all the EEG's channel 4, recording from the right temporal region, is flat. This is presumably related to the fact that the recordings are 'unipolar' and the reference electrode on the lobe of the ear.

However, these blemishes detract from the elegance rather than the usefulness of the book which contains a succinct account of the technique of electroencephalography in children and of the main features of cerebral electrical activity thus recorded.


This second edition, 13 years after the first, is improved in binding, paper and type-face, and though slimmer, accommodates nearly 100 more pages. It lacks the