

REVIEWS

Congenital Malformations of the Heart. By HELEN B. TAUSSIG, M.D., Associate Professor of Pediatrics, Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine. 1947. New York: The Commonwealth Fund (London: Oxford University Press). Pp.618. (Price \$10.00.)

The author's name is already well known as Dr. Blalock's collaborator in the design of the Taussig-Blalock operation. This book contains amongst much else the detailed studies of the congenital cardiac malformation for the relief of which this operation has been undertaken, and emphasizes the particular radiological techniques which make accurate diagnosis possible during life. The author makes it clear that it is a monograph written from personal experience, and she has therefore limited herself to a detailed consideration of those methods which she has actually used. Whilst the book is exceptionally comprehensive, the clinical study of the heart by catheterization and the use of radio-opaque substances has developed so rapidly since it was written that it must be regarded as saying the penultimate rather than the last word on the subject. It is profusely illustrated with line and colour diagrams, and beautifully produced.

Éléments de Puériculture. By B. WEILL-HALLE, Directeur honoraire de l'École de Puériculture de la Faculté de Médecine de Paris. 1947. Paris: L'Expansion Scientifique Française. Pp. 260. (Price 450 French fr.)

This little book, dealing with the physical and mental development of the child, is 'guide aux mamans' rather than a contribution to the scientific literature. Written during the occupation, it bears unavoidable signs of detachment from the recent advances which have been made, particularly in the U.S.A., in the study of child development. It contains, however, a liberal sprinkling of the salt of wise counsel and a peppering of outworn shibboleths.

Malaria im Kindesalter. By Prof. Dr. med. ALBERT ECKSTEIN, Professor of Children's Diseases, Ankara. 1946. Basel: S. Karger. Pp. 119. (Price 14 Swiss fr.)

This is one of the best monographs on malaria in childhood that has been produced. The author

deals in detail with prophylaxis, treatment, the clinical picture, and complications. The sections on congenital malaria and 'malarial dystrophy' are of particular interest.

Breast Feeding. By F. CHARLOTTE NAISH, B.A., M.B., B.Ch. (Cantab.). 1948. London: Geoffrey Cumberlege, Oxford University Press. Pp. 151. (Price 10s. 6d.)

It is many years since a Regius Professor of Physic disallowed the thesis 'That Breast Milk is the Best Food for Babies' on the grounds that it was self-evident. One now hears of clinics where a healthy mother who is anxious to breast-feed her baby has to struggle against medical as well as family opposition. Dr. Naish's book is therefore all the more welcome, and one feels the judges were wise in awarding this the Sir Charles Hastings Clinical Essay Prize for 'the promotion of systematic observation, research and record in general practice'. The author writes from personal experience as a mother in addition to observation and management of others, and the reader inevitably gains the impression that she knows what she is talking about. The reviewer has often wondered how nursing mothers so patiently tolerate the pontifications of male, or unmarried female, paediatricians, and this 'guide to the natural feeding of infants' should carry conviction in a way that more scientific writings may fail to do. On the other hand, the author might perhaps have been a little more critical when she recommends such unnatural feeding as thyroid for torpor in the first week of life; the reader might reasonably expect some critical assessment of the evidence of its value. Similarly, when she emphasizes that underfeeding is a more important cause of difficulty than overfeeding (in which she is no doubt right), it is salutary to remember that a previous generation of students was being taught the exact reverse by paediatricians also armed with test-weighting machines. Here some exact figures might well be included to drive home the point. Apart from such very minor criticisms, however, this essay can be warmly recommended and endorsed; the chapter on 'The Mind of the Mother' is properly selected for special mention by Professor Moncrieff in his breezy foreword.