to Professor Lisser's sweeping advocacy of early androgenization for the small 'delayed adolescent'. Surely a standardized pattern of strapping androgenic muscularity, with appropriated emotional drives, cannot be a compelling need for all small boys lagging behind pubertal schedules at 12 to 13 years. We also remain worried by the advice that even where the bone-age is quite normal, 'sluggishness, poor concentration, dry straight hair' may, when linked to 'mild growth retardation' and other such non-specific criteria, justify a plunge into endocrine therapy, this time with thyroid of course. We already see thyroid too often stubbornly persisted with for years in vain wait for the 'gratifying improvement' offered here as the yardstick of diagnostic response.

The paediatrician is already better served in books entirely dedicated to his needs in this field. Nevertheless, there is much of lively interest to any physician in contributions of the calibre of that on calcium metabolism, or in the initial sections enunciating general principles. It is here that we especially welcome Lisser's forthright call for a revival of basic clinical skills in balanced clinical approach to the patient as a whole, and Escamilla's portrayal, in frank perspective, of the secondary role and fallibility therein of laboratory aids. These strike healthy reassuring chords in harmony with fundamental traditions of clinical teaching, still unashamedly nurtured here and there.


This beautifully produced book will very soon become a standard reference for all surgeons and paediatricians. It brings up to date the classic work of Ladd and Gross and at the same time widens its scope to include all conditions in childhood requiring surgical treatment.

In these days of anatomically limited specialization how refreshing it is to read a book written by one surgeon dealing in a mastery way with widely different conditions. A surgeon with the experience of Dr. Gross can afford to be dogmatic about the worth of different operations, and therein lies the value of this book. Descriptions of out-of-date methods have been avoided and the essentials compressed into what is still a very readable volume.

The illustrations are numerous and of a very high standard. The steps of the operative procedures are very clearly shown, and perhaps make the more complicated ones look too easy; surgeons with very little experience and imperfect technique might be encouraged to undertake operations beyond their scope.

The excellent chapter on pre-and post-operative treatment of young infants will be of great interest to paediatricians who care for such cases. The advice given is detailed and full of good illustrations on practical procedures.

Perhaps the greatest value of this excellent book will be for reference by those who are called to deal with a child with some rare condition amenable to surgery with which they are unacquainted.

Pediatric Gynecology. By Goodrich C. Schauffler. Third edition. (Pp. 318; 76 illustrations. 57s. or $7.50.) Published by the Year Book Publishers, Chicago; distributed in Great Britain by Interscience Publishers. 1953.

It is a truism that specialities automatically divide themselves into sub-specialities and at first sight this work of Dr. Schauffler would appear to be one of the minuter of such sub-specialities, whether of paediatrics or gynaecology being debatable; but by the time this book has been read little doubt is left that the scope of the subject almost warrants the creation of a new speciality. The description of methods of investigation of the female genitalia, treatment of vaginitis, disorders encountered during adolescence, the surgery of the pelvic contents, with which are included some considerations of the lower gut and rectum, and medico-legal problems combine with short accounts of enuresis and such subjects as Wilms' tumour to create a not inconsiderable subject matter. In some of the more specialized aspects of his subject Dr. Schauffler has enlisted the help of collaborators throughout the book it is clear that these have been prepared to subordinate their individualities to that of the senior author; the result is a homogeneous whole.

Most of the subject matter is based on what is evidently a wide personal experience and there is little of it with which the average British paediatrician will disagree except in such minor points as the treatment of enuresis where such disagreement is only right and traditional. Particularly helpful are the methods of clinical investigation and the treatment of vulvo vaginitis, while the illustrations are at all times clear and contributory.

In spite of its apparently limited appeal this book can be commended with confidence not only to paediatricians but to all clinicians whose work involves the treatment of little girls' pelvic organs, and the reader will find a fairly definite but not unduly dogmatic view expressed on almost any problem in this field on which he seeks guidance.


Dr. Bundesen is President of the Board of Health of Chicago and well known for his organization of the care of premature infants in that city. In the present pamphlet—an enlarged version of a communication read before the Section of Paediatrics of the American Medical Association, at its one hundred and second annual session—he attacks a 'long neglected field of infant mortality', namely those deaths among infants of lower birth weight in the early days of life. His thesis is that all concerned must concentrate on the fact that more deaths occur in the first three days of life than in the whole of the rest of the first year. This is an elaboration of what Clement Smith has called the 'valley of the shadow of birth', and it offers great scope. In particular what Dr. Bundesen calls 'abnormal pulmonary ventilation' requires better efforts to prevent a fatal issue.