BOOK REVIEWS


As stated in the foreword, this monograph is the record of the papers which were delivered and the discussions that took place at the symposium on 'Anoxia of the Newborn Infant', held in London in October, 1951, under the auspices of the Council for International Organizations of Medical Sciences. All the 17 contributors are internationally recognized experts in their own fields, hence the papers are of a high standard, if at times somewhat unrelated to one another.

The papers have been collected under the following headings: clinical, pathological, biochemical, physiological and therapeutic, and in all of them the principal theme is respiration in the newborn. The embryology and evolution of the lungs and the 'hyaline membrane' are discussed and illustrated fully, as is the mode of onset of rhythmical breathing in the premature infant.

This book will be of interest and value both to the obstetrician and the paediatrician, but the title of anoxia of the newborn infant is misleading. Anoxia and its effects are only briefly mentioned.


In his foreword Dr. Warren Cole writes, 'Although this book will find its greatest application to the young surgeon, it is nevertheless so practical and complete for its size that it will be found extremely useful to anyone doing emergency work involving the abdomen.' Although the main interest of readers of the Archives and of the reviewer is, naturally, in the chapter on the acute abdominal lesions of infancy, it is impossible to limit the review to this chapter, good as it is. The book is obviously written by a practical surgeon who has been successful in writing clearly and concisely on a difficult subject. The importance of clinical examination is stressed throughout and it is refreshing to read that 'physicians tend to place too much reliance on laboratory findings, and to utilize them as a less bothersome road to correct diagnosis than their own eyes and ears'. The reviewer has no hesitation in endorsing the opinion of Dr. Warren Cole which is quoted above.


This book, written by two paediatricians, owes and acknowledges a debt to their psychiatric colleagues. Nevertheless, it is written for all who have the ordinary day-to-day care of emotionally disturbed children, and a quotation on the front page, from a Lancet editorial, sets the tone. 'Nature's methods, perfected over millions of centuries, are always purposeful and nearly always right.'

In the authors' introduction they state their aim as seeking 'to bring together from many sources, and from the clinical experience of the authors, the best available information on the psychologic aspects of child care'. This is clearly a difficult task to achieve; no authors so experienced as these can fail to have certain preferences, and possibly a few prejudices. Because they give a large part of their book to summarizing the work of others, it necessarily becomes a work of reference, almost a dictionary, rather than a critical examination and selection of the views which they themselves put forward. While it may not satisfy those who wish to discover a deeper cause for the many manifestations of psychosomatic disorder in childhood, it cannot fail to prove itself an enormously useful book to any worker in this field who wants to know what work has been done, when, where and by whom.

The general arrangement of the book is extremely clear and logical and allows for quick reference to be made to the original papers, even when these deal only with a subdivision of the subject. In a sense it is not a profound book, but it avoids extreme didactic certainty and method, and certainly paves the way, most acceptably, for wider reading.


This publication is the collection of the 68 papers read at the Conference held in Lyons in July, 1952. These fall into three main groups. The first deals with the problem of tuberculosis in schools, including the tracking down of cases by mass radiography, the routine use of the Mantoux test together with the interpretation of the reading of the results, the importance of examining teachers, and the results of B.C.G. vaccination. The second group of papers is concerned with the schooling of backward children, and several of the authors stress the importance of deafness or partial deafness as a cause and deal with the problem of the education of such pupils. The final, miscellaneous, section covers school hygiene—canteens, holidays, open-air schools, oxyuriasis and ringworm infections.

This book should be of interest to all who are in contact with the problems of school health and hygiene. The papers are uniformly short and well written, and the results and conclusions are simply presented.