

## BOOK REVIEWS

**L'accrescimento umano.** By G. DE TONI. (Pp. 240. Lira 1,000-) Brescia, Italy: La Scuola.

Professor de Toni's book is one of a series dealing with the formative years of life, and it is addressed not only to doctors but to educationists and psychologists as well. In considering human growth the author has interpreted his subject widely, and he takes the reader by gentle stages from the conception of the embryo to the pubertal years and the completion of physical development. Not only the physical aspect of the subject is considered, however, but the causes and hormonal direction of growth and the psychological aspects of the total human being receive considerable attention. Somatotypes are explained diagrammatically, and there is an appendix of photographs illustrating different types of product of the human race.

A wealth of information is assembled in this short book, and it should be particularly useful as a background of knowledge for those concerned with the bringing up and education of children.

**Infant Feeding and Feeding Difficulties.** By PHILIP EVANS and RONALD MAC KEITH. Second edition. (Pp. x+277; 66 illustrations. 12s. 6d.) London: J. & A. Churchill, 1954.

That a second edition of this practical guide to the rearing of infants should have been called for three years after the first publication of the book shows that a real need for such a handbook existed. The lay-out of the book is little altered but parts have been revised and the clarity of some of the instructions, particularly on artificial feeding, have been greatly enhanced. These alterations have meant a small increase in the size of the book but the reader will gladly put up with the necessity for reading a little more for the additional ease of understanding.

As with the first edition, this new one will commend itself to all readers by its directness of thought and clarity of expression and last, but not least, by the ease with which information can be extracted from it. With its modest size and price it will continue to appeal to that great public of all professions who are concerned with bringing up babies.

**Paediatrics for the Practitioner.** Edited by WILFRID GAISFORD and REGINALD LIGHTWOOD. (Three volumes illustrated, plus complete index volume. £13 10s. per set.) London: Butterworth. 1953-1955.

These beautifully produced volumes are as much credit to the publishers as their contents are to the eminent team of paediatricians and others who have been co-opted from all over the world to compose *Paediatrics for the Practitioner*.

Whereas the many excellent textbooks of paediatrics available are generally aimed at the paediatrician, the

target of Gaisford and Lightwood is, as the title indicates, essentially the family doctor; while, therefore, there is an almost complete coverage of paediatric subjects, each is dealt with mainly from the point of view of what can be done by the family doctor in the patient's own home. The depressing size of the three volumes of subject matter is to some extent countered by the inclusion of a separate index volume, itself running to no less than 119 pages, the primary use of which in most instances will enable one to select the requisite volume for reading up a particular subject. A foreword says that advances in paediatrics will be dealt with in special supplementary volumes.

It will be interesting to see if the simplified presentation of its subject will seduce practitioners from their accustomed textbook of paediatrics to this monumental work—with its monumental price. There can be no doubt that *Paediatrics for the Practitioner* is as authoritative as any similar work and as up to date as any production of this kind can be. Indeed, editors, authors and publishers must have worked in very close and willing collaboration to have enabled the four volumes to appear in such a short space of time; all are deserving of congratulations.

**Diseases of Infancy and Childhood, Vols. I and II.** Second edition. Edited by LEONARD PARSONS and SEYMOUR BARLING, assisted by Clifford G. Parsons. (Pp. xli+2,075; 338 figures, 4 coloured plates. 168s.) Oxford University Press (London: Geoffrey Cumberlege). 1954.

This is a book of 2,075 pages, on good paper, weighing just over half a stone.

There can be few textbooks which have experienced so many vicissitudes in their preparation. The previous edition was printed in 1933. Preparations for the second edition were far advanced in 1939, when war stopped further work. After the war different contributors had to be found, and in 1950 much of the script was in the galley proof stage when Sir Leonard Parsons died, and the work was held up once more. The present editors deserve sincere congratulations for finally completing the book in the face of great difficulties. The various revisions of the script which have of necessity been made have probably done much to bring about the very high quality of the final product, which is a great tribute to the present editors.

As the editors regretfully state in the preface, some of the treatments recommended are now out of date. These concern almost entirely the use of antibiotics, cortisone, and a few specific drugs such as those for threadworms, and it involves only a very small fraction of the book. It is not a vital matter. It is virtually impossible to prepare a text of this magnitude which will be up to date by the time it is published. As long as that