Pathologie Infantile. Second edition; in two volumes.
Edited by R. Debré, E. Lesne and P. Rohmer.
This is a cross between the textbook of Debré and Lelong and a Recent Advances in Paediatrics, and as it deals with the whole picture of disease in childhood from causation to treatment the word pathologie in the title may be slightly misleading to the English eye. In spite of the size of the volumes, it is a comment on the growing bulk of paediatric knowledge that no subject is considered exhaustively but that the reader is led through the different illnesses with almost breathless speed. To anyone accustomed to the English textbook lay-out it is rather difficult to find one's way around these two books. First, the table of contents appears at the end of the volume and, secondly, only Volume II has an index, and this in places is sketchy.

It is still open to doubt whether reference books such as these should not appear in loose-leaf form, so that sections may be brought up to date by the issue of a supplement as is the case with Debré and Lelong's Pédiatrie; and one cannot help wondering if there is in the French literature room for both Pathologie Infantile and Pédiatrie. The labour involved in bringing Pathologie Infantile up to date as new advances are made compares unfavourably with the simplicity of issuing new sections of Pédiatrie; and undoubtedly this latter method of avoiding the need for new editions must, in view of rising costs in every direction, be a major development of the near future.

This book presents a review of hare lip and cleft palate from almost every aspect, and is clearly the result of wide experience and study.
The preliminary chapters on the anatomy and physiology of the palate and mechanism of oro-nasal closure lead on to a comprehensive review of the evolution of cleft palate surgery and the problems associated with feeding and speech, and finally with treatment.
The author has emphasized the importance of close cooperation between surgeon, orthodontist and speech therapist in these cases, and although this book is of essential interest to the professional speech therapist, it could be read with profit by all who are concerned with this difficult problem.

This is a pamphlet of 46 pages concerned with the diagnosis and disposal (including treatment) of children who in England would be called (in the terms of the Education Act of 1944) educationally subnormal and ineducable. The section on diagnosis is the shorter and less adequate, particularly in that it does not mention the problem of the differential diagnosis of defect and psychosis. The larger section (33 pages) describes the existing arrangements in some countries for dealing with such children, outlines what, in the opinion of the committee, are their principal needs, and discusses at length the best ways in which their needs can be met. The last section on the need for the coordination of the many services involved in the welfare of a mentally subnormal child is perhaps the most important. The report, which is very well written, should win the approval of all relevant workers. Its recommendations are clear and precise without being dogmatic. A valuable refresher course for all people concerned with children whether in medicine, education or the social services.

Herzkrankheiten im Säuglingsalter. By E. Rossi.
This monograph, with a foreword by Professor Fanconi, comes from the Kinderspital in Zurich, and this fact will ensure a good reception for it. The investigation and diagnosis of heart disease and heart malformation have advanced to paramount importance and it is from this standpoint that Dr. Rossi has written his book.
A short introductory chapter on the normal infant's heart is followed by a rather potted consideration of all the congenital malformations one after the other. In the third chapter various types of myocarditis are considered and from these are separated a group called myocardoses in which infiltration of the heart is involved; in this chapter, too, endocardial fibro-elastosis is quite properly given consideration. Other chapters are on secondary involvement of the heart and on the medical treatment of cardiac insufficiency.
Throughout the monograph there are ample pictures and diagrams to illustrate precisely the author's points, and the various types of disease considered are enlarged by descriptions of his own cases. This book can be wholly recommended.

The title of this book is an understatement of the contents. The book opens with a glossary of some 70 terms in common use. In the next chapters the author takes the reader by the hand and introduces him to all the important terms in very simple language. The various mechanisms involved in fluid and electrolyte homeostasis are equally simply displayed and the results of disturbances of the normal equilibrium by disease discussed.
In the next section, repair solutions are described and their use in differing circumstances discussed. Chapters 7 to 13 then deal with individual problems, such as diarrhoea, diabetic coma, burns, surgical conditions, etc. In each chapter the same general formula is used—a description of the condition, the clinical manifestations, with one or more case reports, 'pathophysiology' (the fluid-electrolyte disturbance), laboratory findings, treatment. In dealing with laboratory findings all useful technical methods are discussed, not simply those relative...
to water and electrolytes. Similarly in treatment, nearly as much space is given to general treatment of the condition as is given to the correction of the water-electrolyte disturbances. The final chapters are on techniques of blood taking and fluid administration.

This method of presentation has advantages if it is desired to look up the treatment of one condition, but it does entail much repetition. All through this book the emphasis is on the practical clinical aspects, and one can almost hear the author’s sigh of relief as he turns from the theoretical section to the clinical sections.

For a book of this size, there is very little to take exception to, and these few criticisms are only of minor points.


This book contains the first results of a longitudinal study of the development of children in post-war Germany. Centres in Frankfurt, Nuremberg, Stuttgart, Bonn, Remscheid and Grevenbroich have combined to collect and collate a vast amount of clinical material which this book presents and analyses. Less attention is paid to physical than to mental and psychological development and the thoroughness with which the data are worked out is admirable.

It is interesting to know that longitudinal studies, like those at present being undertaken in this country by the Child Study Centre, are bearing their fruits in other countries, and we can look forward to similar reports from these German trials in the future. Much of the present book is concerned with the methods employed in the study, and the authors will be able to contract subsequent monographs by omission of much of this section of the present book; this will reduce size without detracting from merit.

Thieme have maintained their expected standard of production.


Who does not sometimes envy his house physician on the grounds that H.P.s spend all their time doing ‘real’ medicine, unlike ourselves who spend so much time dealing with housing authorities, food officers, regional boards, enthusiastic but ill-informed laymen all too willing to help, headmasters all too unwilling to take deserving children? All very different from our vague memory of a clinical Garden of Eden without serpentine social problems.

Dr. Lewis’s book is very relevant to what the house officer of today knows to be ‘real’ medicine and to the common worries about the best management of children. It deals with the Merstham experimental reception centre for deserted, maladjusted, homeless, neglected children. Five hundred children were admitted there between 1947 and 1950, and their family background studies and their physical and mental health observed, so that the most suitable homes or schools could be chosen. The Curtis Committee suggested that all children received into care by a public authority should go to such a centre. In practice most of them are in public care because of temporary illness of a parent, but at least a third need the careful placing that only well-staffed and well-run placement centres can give.

The book tells of children who had repeatedly been returned to the authority from successive foster homes, more disturbed each time, and it was partly to avoid such mal-placements that the Merstham Centre was started. Dr. Lewis has clearly established the value of such centres.

Dr. Lewis’s follow-up studies also contribute to our knowledge of the causes of behaviour disorders, for she confirms that in general parental rejection tends to lead to unsocialized, aggressive behaviour, while neglect leads to socialized delinquency and constraint tends to produce neurotic behaviour.

All children’s doctors should read at least the summary of Chapter 5 and the whole of Chapter 6 (General Reflections), and they should get their lady almoners to read these too. When can a child’s needs be assessed without admission? When is a residential school a preferable placement to a foster home? These and other questions are discussed in a way that will help us to deal with these problems of present paediatrics and help us to understand how the child’s officer and other agencies are trying to help deprived children.


This monograph on paediatric anaesthesia is the latest in the series of American lectures in anaesthesiology. The views expressed are sound and the practising anaesthetist who does not encounter children very often in his daily work will obtain a great deal of practical help.

The main theme is safety, which is well illustrated by the recommended technique of open ether for bronchoscopy and bronchoscopy. Although this technique does not avoid the explosion hazard, in the hands of the average doctor this is a calculated risk and is probably less than the dangers associated with other techniques.

As well as covering most aspects of paediatric anaesthesia, there are sections on blood transfusion, oxygen therapy and asphyxia of the newborn, all of which are concise and factual. If there is a need in this country for a handbook on paediatric anaesthesia, this one fulfils the purpose adequately.


The difference in price between these two volumes must...