be accounted for by the fact that the monograph on whooping cough is elegantly produced and bound, while that on meningo-encephalitis is a utilitarian production with a paper cover. Apart from this the two monographs are remarkably similar in approach to their subjects of whooping cough and benign lymphocytic meningitis respectively, and both contain introductions by that indefatigable writer of prefaces, Professor Robert Debré.

The main interest in the consideration of whooping cough at the moment turns on prevention and treatment, and in the book under review the difficulties of efficient vaccine preparation are discussed, and there is an informative section on the pros and cons of immunization in the neonatal period, together with some substantiation of the hypothesis that the newborn infant is serologically immature. Compared with the practice of other countries the authors recommend later vaccination both for whooping cough and with combined prophylactics. The section on the treatment of established whooping cough is as indeterminate as the treatment of the condition itself, and indeed cannot well be otherwise.

Les Meningo-encephalites Lymphocytaires chez l’Enfant is a praiseworthy attempt to bring together the vast mass of data concerning what in this country is called benign lymphocytic meningitis or aseptic meningitis, yet the subject is wider than this in that the leptospiroses are considered; in fact almost every non-bacterial condition affecting the central nervous system is considered. The author concludes rather sadly that although a great deal of progress has been made in the differentiation of the various diseases during the last 30 years, a great deal remains still unknown of the mechanism whereby the diseases are brought about; and further, he indicates how much our diagnostic skill is in advance of our ability to treat what we can diagnose.


This is a facsimile reproduction of a book so famous that to review it would be an impertinence. The American Heart Association has rendered a service to the study of congenital heart disease by making available a work of reference which has long been out of print.


This year book follows the usual lay-out and contains abstracts of some 330 of the more—and less—important papers dealing with problems of child health and disease published during the 12-months period under review. Many of the abstracted papers are followed by ex cathedra pronouncements by other workers in the same field.

This is a quite excellent book for those not in touch with paediatric literature to discover what has been going on during the previous 12 months, and a welcome improvement is to be found in the increased number of non-American papers abstracted, the book assuming thereby a far less parochial appearance. Production, printing and binding maintain the usual high standards and, for the wealth of information contained, the book is very good value for the money.


The fact that this book has been reprinted and has now gone into a second edition within three years of the publication of the first is proof that it is appreciated by those for whom it is primarily intended, viz., students and those working for paediatric examinations. The reasons for this are obvious, since the authors write clearly, summarize much recent American data, and modestly refrain from introducing more than a minimum of original ideas or controversial discussion. In fact, almost all the numerous tables and diagrams are derived from orthodox sources and the references demand no knowledge of any language but English; there are very few which require access to other than the American literature, or suggest the historical background from which this work has stemmed. It is perhaps this parochialism which will make the book unsatisfying to the more critical reader. The section on ‘behavioral development’, for instance, contains no reference to the recent work of Isaacs, Klein, the Freud and the Viennese school. The book can be recommended as a useful if somewhat pedestrian summary of current American work, but not as a balanced introduction to the subject as a whole.


Somewhat belatedly, this book records the papers contributed to the First International Symposium of Medical Genetics, held in Rome in September, 1953. The occasion was the official inauguration of that city of the splendid new Gregor Mendel Institute for the study of medical genetics and twins. The papers are written in Italian, French, German and English and give a good cross-sectional view of the development of medical genetics in Europe. England is represented by a paper by Dr. P. L. Mollison on ‘Haemolytic Disease of the Newborn’. Other papers of paediatric interest are those on skeletal abnormalities, juvenile diabetes, sickle-cell anaemia and poliomyelitis. In addition, there are included translations of an authoritative address by Pope Pius XII on the problems involved in eugenics and genetic counselling which will be helpful to any physician who may be consulted by Roman Catholic patients who run a risk of having genetically determined abnormalities in their children.