BOOK REVIEWS


This book on paediatrics, something, as the author claimed in its first edition, more than a mere handbook, retains its popularity and appears once again, only slightly swollen and still vested with a characteristic modesty which, while it enhances the distinction of the writing, scarcely conceals a disregard for modern trends in textbook production.

The claims of advancing medicine are adequately met by a dozen or more descriptions of conditions that were not known or recognized previously and by considerable re-writing of sections dealing with such conditions as prematurity and vitamin-resistant rickets, about which our knowledge has grown and changed; also by a lurid coloured frontispiece. Links with the past include 10 pages on diphtheria, some charming footnotes on such themes as how to make liver broth (p. 588) or hydrochloric acid milk (p. 694), and a harrowing description of how to resuscitate an infant with gastro-enteritis on the verge of collapse by holding it in a mustard bath until the nurse’s arms tingle.

Dr. Sheldon’s book will, and certainly deserves to, retain its popularity. It is simply written, easily handled, deceptively full of useful information and deals with all the common conditions and many of the rarities of modern paediatrics. It has, moreover, that mysterious quality that makes even Dr. Sheldon’s paediatric colleagues reach for it on a shelf where it sits proud and aloof amongst its multivolumed continental and transatlantic competitors.


This pocket-sized textbook of paediatrics defies description. Weighing a few ounces and measuring 7 in. × 4 in. × 1 in. it sits easily and unnoticed in the coat pocket. Yet its 550 pages embrace the whole of paediatrics. The subject matter is concise and highly systematized, with headings and sub-headings in descending order, whilst a vast amount of accurate information is conveyed by a multitude of plans, illustrations, charts, tables and schemata.

All the major diseases of childhood are adequately dealt with, and information on recently described conditions, new forms of therapy and modern concepts of physiology and pathology is up to date. Normal physiological and psychological development is taken from puberty through to adolescence. Anthropometric and physiological data, a drug index, poisons and antidotes chart and conversion tables completes the picture.

The semi-stiff binding is adequate, the paper is tissue thin, and the printing is outstanding for its clarity and beauty.

On the shelf beside a multivolumed system of paediatrics one is reminded of Jack the Giant Killer. Amazing value for 3 dollars.


This, the 73rd edition of the Medical Annual, follows the tradition and format of its immediate forerunners and, as usual, affords an admirable bird’s eye view of the previous year’s outstanding work. The eminence of the contributors ensures that the year’s advances are dealt with in an authoritative manner, and the volume will be as useful to the specialist wanting to know what his colleagues in other specialties have been up to as to the family doctor attempting to keep up with the whole of medicine. Few will read all 548 pages, but everyone will find something in the Annual to interest and inform them.


‘En imprimant ces textes, nous avons pensé être utiles à ceux des auditeurs qui, pour mieux en pénétrer le sens, désiraient lire, à tête reposée, dans le silence du cabinet, une conférence précédemment entendue.’

These words, conjuring up what vision of education through ‘sessions of sweet silent thought’, introduces the new series of conferences on neonatal problems from the Medical Faculty of the University of Paris. The postgraduate seminar or round table conference, slow to enter English medical education, has considerable advantages in disseminating knowledge, and this collection addressed to obstetric, paediatric and postgraduate students covers the subjects of infant mortality, neonatal trauma, necropsies on premature infants, treatment of white asphyxia, neonatal infection, early diagnosis of oesophageal atresia and haemolytic disease of the newborn. These chosen subjects are covered adequately