BOOK REVIEWS


This is a comprehensive survey of the newborn infant, its development before and after birth, its appearance and behaviour, its feeding and management and the maladies, small and large, to which it is prone. It is intended primarily for midwives, and in writing it the authors have not just composed a medical book in a minor key, but have throughout borne in mind the special requirements of the midwife and presented her with clear and detailed advice on almost any problem with which she may be faced. The book manages to be up to date without being controversial and uncontroversial without being dull. The numerous diagrams and photographs add not only to the palatability but also to the nutritive value of the book. Some of the colour photographs, however, whilst striking, are not altogether convincing.

Although this work is clearly designed for the midwife, the lack of any good modern textbook on the newborn will extend its sale to medical practitioners, to whom it can be confidently recommended.

Finally, the reviewer agrees with the authors that the frontispiece speaks for itself.


The first edition of this book appeared in 1947, before the advent of the Health Service or the Children Act of 1948, to mention two only of the big changes in legislation and administration which have occurred since then. In consequence the present volume is almost a new book, being extensively revised and with much new material. The editor’s own new contributions include an excellent chapter on punishment and another on child health in the tropics. Dr. H. P. Tait now deals most competently with many of the present-day services for children, and another specially valuable new chapter is on prenatal development by Professor I. Donald. The very large increase in size is to be regretted, but it is difficult to suggest what should be pruned. Miss Anna Freud’s two chapters (as in the first edition) are a little sectarian for everyone’s taste and this may put readers off acquiring important information on emotional development. Professor Ellis has wisely drawn in many of his fresh recruits from his present Scottish colleagues, largely acquired since the first edition, but their views and statements are broad enough to cover the British Isles where this book should continue to be a valuable contribution to child health, and a useful work of reference.


There are by now very many books on paediatrics available to the consumer; textbooks, handbooks, revision books, synopses, books directed to the general practitioner, to the specialist, to the radiologist, to the nurse, to the physiotherapist and others; in English, French, German, Italian, Spanish, and so on. It must be assumed that all have their adherents or followers, or so many would not be produced. Many are destined to flower briefly and be seen no more, while others, Phoenix-like, are re-born in new and improved fashion as often as advances in their subject necessitate. Such a one of these is Paterson’s Sick Children, the 7th edition of which, coming nine years after its predecessor, has been almost completely revised by Dr. Lightwood.

The remaining cohorts of admirers of Dr. Paterson, and there are very many in this country who came under his influence, will be delighted that the style and format of his book have been so successfully retained in the latest version. As common things tend to occur commonly, so the emphasis on the diagnosis and treatment of the commoner ailments of childhood is always to the fore—rareties are left to the weightier and more comprehensive tomes. New sections have been created by Dr. Cicely Williams on the ailments of children in the tropics and by Dr. J. P. M. Tizard on disorders of the nervous system. There are also most useful and up-to-date appendices on the antibiotics and other drugs, and vitamins, electrolytes and ossification data.

Those accustomed to using Sick Children will scarcely recognize this latest version, but whatever any previous edition has been to them one will, and more so.

German Medical Journal, Vol. I. Published by Georg Thieme, Stuttgart. 1956. (Annual subscription £1 10s.: DM. 17.60.)

Those who have difficulty in reading the German language will welcome the appearance of a new journal—the German Medical Journal. Its purpose is to present an overall view of German medicine in the English language and the first number contains half-a-dozen original articles and a series of medical snippets. It is proposed that the most important articles from the Deutsche Medizinische Wochenschrift will be translated (selection of the articles for translation will be a thankless task) and there will be editorials, reviews, abstracts and the like.

Whether this translation of selections from one German journal will enable the reader to obtain a complete picture of German medicine is problematical, but it is a worthwhile undertaking which, if successful, will be invaluable. This one more journal to read is to appear monthly and will cost £1 10s. a year.