BOOK REVIEWS

From these it is clear that five of the cases are in fact true epileptics having fits. In another five or even six, however, there is no more basis for diagnosis of epilepsy than electrocardiograms which are either normal (two cases) or just outside the limits of normal (four cases) together, of course, with an immediate response to phenobarbitone.

The monograph is rounded off by Appendix A, analysing the author’s 100 cases of convulsive disorders, and Appendix B which, even more irrelevantly to the main thesis, inadequately discusses the difficult questions whether, and when, convulsions should be treated. At 7s. this monograph is expensive, tendentious and misleading.


This is a comprehensive and excellently illustrated guide to angiocardiography in congenital heart lesions. It is based upon the findings in a large number of cases and is therefore a useful addition to the libraries of all those concerned with the diagnosis of these conditions. It would be of special value to anyone embarking on this branch of radiology for the first time.

There is a good account of the part played by various workers throughout the world in the development of angiocardiography and an adequate bibliography. The technique of the authors is described in detail. Some experienced workers would be less inclined than they resort to a second injection of dye when the first yields inadequate information, but their mortality rate of only 1-5% perhaps justifies their practice.

A good chapter on normal appearances is followed by a description of the findings in the various congenital abnormalities, the angiocardiographic appearances of each lesion being preceded by a useful summary of the symptoms, signs, electrocardiographic and radiological findings.

The authors are probably correct in their opinion that in future the main scope of this method of investigation will be in congenital heart disease in infants and young children, and as their cases are mostly under 5 years of age this book should continue to be of value.


A rapid look through this book with its admirable illustrations and printing on excellent paper makes one look forward with anticipation to reading it. This pleasure is not borne out in practice. There has been considerable carelessness in proof reading. Principle appears on three occasions instead of principal. Items in the index are not in alphabetical order and such an obvious error as ‘frurinary’ has not been spotted. The frequency of plural subjects with singular verbs and vice versa is considerable. There has also been a certain carelessness in presentation, for example, ‘In infancy the amount given at each feed should be calculated on the basis of 2½ ounces per pound of body-weight’. It is possible that most readers will appreciate that the author meant 2½ ounces per pound of body-weight per twenty-four hours. Again, in the part on intravenous infusion, no mention is made of how the nurse should change the bottle, of the danger of air embolism or of the various types of fluid which may be given. In blood transfusion it is stated that ‘if blood belonging to a person of one group is administered by transfusion to a child of a different group then agglutination will inevitably ensue’. This can only lead to confusion when a nurse discovers that she is giving blood of group O to a patient of a different group. One doubts if cystic swellings are invariably due to the persistence of some embryological structure and it seems certain that most nurses will appreciate that the latest antibiotic is not aureomycin. Lymphangitis and lymphadenitis are not even in the index or mentioned in connexion with infection, but are described in the chapter on ear, nose and throat. The want of care in proof reading is illustrated by the sentence regarding fluid replacement in burns: ‘You will not be called upon to perform this calculation yourself but you must be aware of the reasons for its administration’.

While it is difficult to distinguish between surgery and nursing the book should have made some mention of the various anaesthetics, of the healing of wounds and of the conduct of wound dressings, removal of stitches, etc.

The book will be acceptable to those who remain undisturbed by frequent errors in English.


This is the report of the committee of experts, representing many different approaches to the problem, which was set up in 1950 to enquire into the medical, educational and social problems relating to the maladjusted child, with reference to their treatment in the educational system.

The 17 members are unanimous in their report and recommendations, which they admit are not new or revolutionary, as they consider that too little is yet known about maladjustment in children and the ways in which it can be successfully treated to make it possible to generalize, or to suggest ready-made solutions.

They consider that greater efforts should be made to treat the maladjusted child in its own home, with the emphasis being laid on treating the family as a unit. With this end in view, they recommend a great increase in the child guidance services in the next decade, with a vast increase in trained personnel, which they realize will be difficult because of the problems of selection and training. One interesting suggestion being that fully trained paediatricians wishing to train as child psychiatrists should be able to do so without loss of status.

They are concerned that the pre-school child, if maladjusted, is unlikely to receive treatment and recommend
that child guidance clinics should work in close cooperation with child welfare centres in their areas, also, that courses on the emotional development of children should be arranged for school medical officers, doctors working in child welfare centres and general practitioners. They consider that the further development of the consultant paediatric services, provided there is close cooperation with the child guidance services, must react to the advantage of the maladjusted child.

The report is well written and stimulating, it will prove of great interest to all those working in the field of child health.


This is a depressing and dangerous book, written in journalese by two doctors who are directors at the Gesell Institute of Child Development at Yale University. In a book of 350 pages, which sets out to describe child behaviour and development, no mention is made of instinct or of anxiety or of love.

They postulate that 'the human organism seems to act as it does largely because of the way it is built' and derive the conclusion that individuality is largely inborn. Their assessment of the role played by the early family environment in an infant or child's development is clearly stated as follows:

A favorable environment (home or otherwise) can, it appears, permit each individual to develop his most positive assets for living. An unfavorable environment may inhibit and depress his natural potentials. But no environment, good or bad, can so far as we know change him from one kind of individual to another.

One can only assume their lack of experience with children or adults who have had the misfortune to have had an unhappy early relationship with their parents or come from a broken home or have suffered some other disaster in their early environment. When a child is brought up in a normal, happy home, he or she will naturally go through the battles of life but the secure external environment which has built up a stable internal environment in the child will help him to come through the battles each in his own way. When all goes well we do not see the effect of the happy home life in the child as such; it is implicit in the personality and individuality of the child.

One receives the impression that the authors are reassuring the parents. A plan of how a child is expected to develop is put before them: the child will naturally grow into maturity when all problems will have been solved, but maturity does not occur just because there is growth.

In Parts II and III they set themselves the task of advising on problems met with in the developing child. They succeed in giving the parents an adequate picture of patterns of behaviour in normal growth but when it comes to helping the parents to get an insight into the motivations that underlie all behaviour problems, their understanding is naive and one is amazed that in the sixth decade of this century they are determined to deny and ignore all the psychic factors which motivate behaviour.

Nevertheless the authors have put a great deal of work into the book and amassed a wealth of detailed information about the type of behaviour which might be expected to occur at different ages; but the book contains so many self-evident truths that one cannot wholeheartedly recommend it as a help to parents or paediatricians.


This book is addressed primarily to students working or intending to work in child guidance clinics, to medical practitioners and to medical and psychiatric social workers. It may have some value for such workers in India, where other books on this subject are perhaps not easily available, but it is not very well written, and it gives nothing that has not already been set out before in a rather more satisfactory way.

It contains long quotations from other workers in this particular field, and in places where this seems to be a rather unnecessary inclusion of unpleasant details of a sexual nature.

Certainly it is not a book that should be recommended to our students or psychiatric social workers.


This book completes the trilogy begun with Infant and Child in the Culture of Today (1943) and The Child from Five to Ten (1946). But whereas the first two instalments drew freely on Dr. Gesell's long experience and numerous publications relating to infants and young children, Youth deals with an age-group with which he is clearly less familiar. Techniques which helped to clarify patterns of infant behaviour under standard conditions are clearly inadequate for any but the most superficial assessment of adolescents. Informal interviews and a battery of psychometric and other tests have been added, but if their interpretation is as uncritically naive as the section on somatotyping would suggest, it is not surprising that they have added little to current knowledge. The authors dismally admit that the sample on which the study was based was heavily biased to begin with, over 80% of the 165 subjects being drawn from socio-economic groups I and II, intelligence being substantially above average, and selection being largely determined by willingness to co-operate. They refrain from giving more than the barest minimum of statistical analysis of data on the surprising grounds that further tables would give a misleading emphasis on statistical precision. The text, however, would soon correct any such impression, since it is largely devoted to descriptions of 'maturity profiles, maturity trends and growth gradients' in such general terms that no amount of sub-division can mask their fundamental banality. We learn that youths at a given