

BOOK REVIEWS

The Year Book of Pediatrics. Edited by SYDNEY S. GELLIS. (Pp. 469. \$7.50.) Year Book Publishers, Chicago. 1957-58.

The Year Book of Pediatrics for 1957-58 is in the tradition and up to the standard of its very competent predecessors. The notice taken of non-American activities has been rising over the years and in the present volume more than one third of the articles abstracted are not American; thus a much broader picture of the year's work in children's medicine is presented. In a mixed bag such as this, providing something for everyone, the quality of the work abstracted will inevitably be variable, yet for anyone wishing to see what has gone on in paediatrics in the past year this book will be more valuable than any other; and if the invited comments by selected experts which follow some of the abstracts are as irritating as ever, they are in the tradition of this Year Book and one must presume that there is a demand for them in some quarters or they would not be there.

Paediatrics. Supplement 1957. Edited by WILFRID GAISFORD and REGINALD LIGHTWOOD. (Pp. v+157; 45 figures. 35s.) London: Butterworth. 1957.

This is the second supplement of *Paediatrics* for the Practitioner. It contains original contributions by various specialists, on gamma-globulin and immunity, prophylactic immunization, steroid therapy, skin tuberculosis, congenital heart disease, funnel chest, cysts of the neck, the testes and penis, and galactosaemia. In addition there is a further *Noter-up* or *Bringer-up-to-dater* which entirely replaces the previous edition.

The volume is as factual and practical as those preceding it and the presentation maintains the high standard set. It makes one miserable to note that the combined price for the set of volumes is now £14 10s. 0d.

Pediatric Profiles. Edited by BORDEN S. VEEDER. (Pp. 267.) St. Louis: C. V. Mosby. 1957.

As the illustrious men of their day die they leave behind them many forms of memorial. Not least of these perhaps is the enduring memory which lingers in the hearts and minds of those who knew them. A later generation may read their writings and they may also be known by one or other alteration they have made to the subject or discipline they adorned. But scientific writing tends not to evoke the personality of the writer, nor does a ward block named after someone conjure up to a younger generation a picture of the man whose memory it honours. In order that succeeding generations should know something not only of the scientific contributions of the great but also something of their personalities the *Journal of Pediatrics* in 1953 started to acquire and publish a series of word pictures of great paediatricians,

written by people who had known them intimately. Thirty of these have now been collected in this volume entitled *Pediatric Profiles*, in which worldly achievements are incidental and subordinate to the character and personality of the subject.

The original idea was that only Americans should be included and that they should be not still living, but as the Editorial Board of the *Journal of Pediatrics* progressed, however, they realized that some men who had exerted a national influence on American paediatrics were not in fact Americans, and the scope of the subject matter had to be widened to include some British and Continental paediatricians; we thus find Jacobi, the first President of the American Pediatric Society, next to Sir Thomas Barlow, while Abt is followed by Jundell of Sweden, Still, Poynton, Cooley and Brennemann. What a series of subjects for their authors!

Pediatric Profiles will find a welcome wherever the discipline of paediatrics is followed. To the existing generation, many of whom will remember some of the characters depicted in the book, memories will be re-awakened vividly, while coming generations of paediatricians will find first-hand appraisals of the personalities of men whose work will be bound to influence their daily lives and doings. The book ends with two nostalgic little pieces of what has been called anecdotal, one on paediatrics in Vienna at the turn of the century by Bela Schick and the other by the editor, Veeder, an account of his first National Pediatric Meeting in Washington in 1910.

Orthopedic Surgery in Infancy and Childhood. By Albert Barnett Ferguson, Jr. and five other contributors. (Pp. xii+508; 504 figures. 120s.) London: Baillière, Tindall and Cox; U.S.A.: Williams and Wilkins. 1957.

This book aims to fulfil the need for a comprehensive text-book of the surgery of the locomotor system (excluding fractures) as applied to children.

The authors are to be congratulated on the success of their venture and particularly on their presentation of those aspects of the subject which are controversial. In general their practice is in accord with that of orthopaedic surgeons in this country and such differences as exist are in emphasis rather than of a fundamental nature.

The readers of this journal will find much to interest them in this book which concentrates more on principles of management than on details of surgical treatment. Most of the common orthopaedic conditions are well described and rarities mentioned in sufficient detail to satisfy the needs of those not primarily concerned with this speciality.

Physicians will probably appreciate the concise and clear account of disorders of calcium and phosphorus

metabolism contributed by Klein. The section on generalized disorders of the skeleton by Ferguson, although using some terms unfamiliar to British readers is stimulating and pursues an aetiological theme convincingly and with conviction. There is a balanced review of indications for treatment in cerebral palsy and when surgical measures are mentioned emphasis is on the few well-trying and successful procedures such as triple arthrodesis, and even these are discussed in a cautious way. The many operations described which have a theoretical rather than a practical application are rightly left out.

The illustrations are excellent and help both to clarify and amplify the text. The bibliography is well chosen and affords a good introduction to further reading in those subjects which in a book of this nature must be covered briefly. This book should be in the library of every orthopaedic and paediatric hospital and department, but its price, £6, will probably exclude it from the personal collection of many paediatricians and surgeons. This is a pity.

Chirurgie Préventive de la Tuberculose Ostéo-articulaire. By R. KAUFMANN. (Pp. 174; 49 figures. Fr. fr. 2,000.) Paris: Doin. 1958.

The author begins 'when this work appears, M. Blondin will have proved before the Academy of Surgery that we know how to cure and above all prevent caries of the vertebrae. Osteolysis which precedes caries is a non-specific reversible state following infection of the adjacent soft parts. Once they have been drained the bone becomes normal'. The primary lesion is lymphatic and the author advises excision of the diseased lymphatic glands and abscess leaving the wound open. Despite endless repetition and the obvious sincerity of the author the reviewer remains unconvinced. It would have been better to include more evidence instead of referring the reader to seven previous publications. Despite these criticisms it is a refreshing book which stimulates thought on a subject which seemed to be cut and dried.

Cryptorchism. By CHARLES W. CHARNY and WILLIAM WOLGIN. (Pp. viii+140; 28 figures. 45s.) London: Cassell. 1957.

This book covers the whole field of cryptorchidism except for intentionally making only brief reference to its endocrine aspects.

The various causes of non-descent are considered. The gubernaculum appears to play little or no part. The importance of short testicular blood vessels is stressed. Failure of development of the processus vaginalis and its descent into the scrotum is usually accompanied by descent of the testicle. Excluding gross endocrine disorders there are two main causes of non-descent of the testicle: mechanical difficulties or an inherent incapacity of the testicle to respond to normal gonadotrophic stimuli.

The chapter devoted to pathological findings forms the kernel of the book. These findings have been obtained by testicular biopsies done at operation and to check treatment by operation and by chorionic hormone. The

opinion is given that the follow-up of a series of cases is almost valueless without serial biopsies, although, of course, it is realized that seminal analyses afford assessment in cases of bilateral cryptorchidism. It appears that little histological difference exists before the age of 9 or 10 years between the scrotal and non-scrotal testis. The degree of pathological change depends more on the age of the patient than the degree of descent. With the histological material available it was not possible to determine the relative importance of congenital testicular deficiency and the effect of unfavourable environment on the testicle. The histology investigations confirm the previously established findings that in the adult unilateral cryptorchidism allows normal libido, potentia and fertility whilst in bilateral cases it is often only the fertility that is absent.

The second part of the book deals with symptomatology, complications, diagnosis and therapy. The authors' study of the literature and their own experience confirm that many complications are commoner in the undescended testicle than in the normal. Of especial importance are trauma, torsion, associated hernia and malignancy—besides, of course, infertility. It appears that the undescended testicle is about 33 times more liable to become malignant than is the scrotal. It also appears that the intra-abdominal testicle is four times more liable to malignancy than is the inguinal type. The malignancy is usually a seminoma. The point is made that when this occurs in a testicle that has been brought down by orchidopexy, the inguinal lymph nodes should be excised as well as the testicle and its coverings. The authors found very little evidence that psychic disturbances occurred frequently or played an important part.

Possible treatment by gonad-stimulating hormone (chorionic gonadotrophin) followed by androgen is discussed. Great importance is given to the avoidance of overdosage because of the likelihood of harming the other (scrotal) testis. The authors could not be counted as strong supporters of this sort of therapy; they do point out, though, that such treatment differentiates testicles that will and will not descend without operation. The authors attach no value to this therapy as a pre-operative measure to facilitate the operative technique.

They refer briefly to the various techniques of orchidopexy and stress the importance of adequate mobilization of both the testicular vessels and the vas deferens.

Basing their opinion on the histopathology of biopsy specimens which indicates the changes of physiological puberty as beginning at about 9 or 10 years of age, the authors feel that all treatment by hormones or by operation can safely be left until that age. As stated above they accept the use of hormones as a diagnostic and a therapeutic guide but no more. Regarding orchidopexy, in unilateral cases it is felt that the value of this operation is open to question. In these patients fertility is already assured by the other scrotal testis and investigations have shown very poor results of spermatogenesis following orchidopexy. Furthermore, in some cases total atrophy has followed operation. Thus in prepubertal patients orchidopexy is not recommended.