follow fashions popular in other countries but that is not a complete answer. The attitude represented here is not only old-fashioned but is also inefficient, just as ours was 30 years ago. For example, insufficiency of breast milk is said to be revealed by falling-off of the weight curve, pallor and lack of tissue firmness of the child, sometimes by digestive troubles, false diarrhoea or vomiting. Do not French babies announce their hunger by crying? Test weighing is recommended, it being said that in the second month it should be ‘110 grms to 120 grms’ and in the third month ‘125 grms to 135 grms’. Do not French babies vary widely in their individual needs? The section on breast feeding is too brief and, although it includes a table of amino-acids contained in breast milk, it does not refer to the draught reflex, knowing about which is an ‘éclatante’ aid in helping mothers to breast feed successfully. There is nothing about the prevention of cracked nipples and, in saying it is sometimes necessary to suspend suckling, no mention is made of the need to express the milk to avoid engorgement when suckling is omitted. A proper knowledge of the physiology and detailed management and difficulties of breast feeding would be a better way of increasing the number of women successfully breast-feeding than the remedy the author recommends, which is, ‘Convinced of the striking superiority of breast milk, doctors should proclaim it incessantly and devote themselves to a continued propaganda’. One could make minor criticisms; for example, under renal acidosis, anorexia is mentioned as an important symptom but renal acidosis is not given when the causes of anorexia are discussed.

Dr. Delthil was formerly Chef de Laboratoire at the Hôpital des Enfants Malades. Whether he is now in practice I do not know. However, there are doctors in Paris who know what immense practical help knowledge of the physiology of lactation and child-centred management, instead of mechanical management of the individual child’s feeding, can give. I am inclined to suggest that one of the small English text books on infant feeding adapted by a French paediatrician might be found of greater practical value than this particular work. I am sorry to say this for there is much that is very good and very acceptable in the book but the author seems to me to have missed the chance of including the last 20 years’ advances in the practice of successful infant feeding.


Some such book as this should be read by every paediatrician in training. Child guidance is an established adjunct to child health, and the report of the Commission of Child Guidance in this country visualizes considerable extension of this policy. Although the general pattern of all child guidance is similar, the underlying psychiatric and psychological principles in each particular clinic are to a large extent dependent on the training and principles of the consulting psychiatrist in charge. This book is a concise, straightforward exposition of the full Freudian outlook on child guidance. It is written in plain English for the intelligent, but not specially trained, medical personnel, and it is only necessary to become fully acquainted with the precise meaning of such terms as ‘ego’, ‘super-ego’, ‘id’, and a few others, to be clear of the meaning of every page. Since its psychological orientation is totally Freudian, as developed for child guidance by Melanie Klein, Susan Isaacs, Aichorn and others of a rather closely knit group of workers, it will certainly not meet with universal acceptance by paediatricians or child guidance workers in this country. Nevertheless, every page is written with such seriousness and such intensity of understanding and sympathy for the sufferings of the emotionally disturbed child, and so much of it has universal application, that it might well be read with equally responsive understanding by all those engaged in child health work.

The book is divided into seven sections: the first, of four chapters, discusses the general symptoms of emotional complications in childhood and the kind of influences it may exert on mental growth and development. It also takes the reader through the general arrangements and methods of therapy, the working and the staffing, of a particular child guidance clinic in the United States. The following four sections deal successively with four major clinical groupings of emotionally disturbed children, namely, the ‘Neurotic Child’, the ‘Child with Personality Problems’, the ‘Child who “Acts Out”’, and finally the ‘Child with a Tenuous Hold on Life’. Each of these major divisions of from three to six chapters, takes the reader through particular individual types of maladjustment illustrated by brief appropriate extracts from case notes. The last section discusses in general terms the prevention of social and emotional maladjustment and defines some of the wider aims of child guidance.

The author is obviously convinced that with adequate psychotherapy, that is with therapy often lasting over two or three years, but sometimes very much less, children who would otherwise grow up with such maladjustment as to make their adult life burdensome to themselves and others, can eventually be salvaged sufficiently to grow up reasonably well-adjusted human beings. This is a considerable claim, particularly when one reads some of his fearful case notes. But what he does not make quite so clear is how successful a widely distributed network of child guidance clinics will prove to be in dealing with the day-to-day maladjustment of quite a large proportion of the child population. If adult maladjustment has its roots in childhood, which is widely accepted, this latter problem is of vast importance and would be the decisive justification for the large and expensive set up that exists in America and to a lesser extent in this country.


The main theme of this book is the importance of distinguishing between deafness, mental deficiency and emotional disturbance in children with severe delay in speech development. A brief account is given of two residential units set up by the author to investigate and