BOOK REVIEWS


This book is full of sound common sense. It is not intended to be a family doctor but information on some diseases is given for which the child would be nursed at home. It is in three parts. The first deals with observation and the nursing of sick children at home. It is written in such a way that it makes for a good patient-doctor relationship. The second part gives good advice on providing interests for children of all ages who are confined to bed. The suggestions are useful and inexpensive. The third part discusses the problems arising when a child has to go into hospital. The book can be highly recommended but it seems a pity that the price is so high.


Although the preface states that this book 'is not primarily a medical text' but is designed for 'a more general public', there is much in it to profit family doctors, school doctors and paediatricians.

The main part of the book is composed of 15 chapters contributed by individual experts on all the usually accepted childhood handicaps, poliomyelitis, cerebral palsy, visual defects, speech and hearing defects, muscular dystrophy, mongolism, as well as some of the less common handicaps such as familial dysautonomia and amputations.

Each of these chapters is a clearly written guide to the background and clinical definition of a specific handicap. The effects of the handicap are explained and treatment as well as general management of the child are detailed. Special note is made of the various agencies concerned in medical and surgical care, physiotherapy, schooling, occupational training and guidance in choosing a career.

Five of the chapters are illustrated and most contain references to recent work, especially to recent articles in paediatric literature.

The first five chapters are separate essays, defining the part played by the members of 'The Team' in the management of the disabled child. The points of view of the parent, the physician, the psychiatrist, the teacher, and the social worker are given equal prominence.

A chapter on the Role of Adoption Agencies is somewhat unexpected in a book of this sort, but makes clear the readiness of would-be adopting parents in the United States to accept children with a variety of handicaps.

The following chapter on Heredity Counselling gives examples of family situations in which such discussion had been very important.

The final chapters are a series of short guides. Besides lists of play, reading and education materials, they include in 'Guides for Discipline' and 'Guides for Parents' two short, thoughtful essays on the general management of any disabled child.

Although the book has 27 contributors, the Editor has been successful in obtaining a high level of clarity in the descriptions of the various disabilities, of modern methods of management, and of the many agencies involved.

Whilst some of the chapters are directed chiefly to the parents of handicapped children, much of the clinical detail would seem, to a reviewer working in the British Isles, to be far beyond the requirements of the average parent. The book's principal value lies in its wide view of the whole field of handicapped children and its very clear presentation of the details of so many disabilities. It should be read by all who have any part in the clinical, educational or administrative care of any child with a handicap.


The second edition of this important diagnostic manual of congenital heart disease closely follows the pattern of the first and is based on a detailed analysis of material seen at the Karolinska Hospital in Stockholm, now swollen to 742 cases. It is enlarged by four chapters, contains many amplifications and corrections as well as an increased number of illustrations.

In the 30 different abnormalities studied, six contain between 60 and 140 examples of each and between them comprise 80% of the total. They are patent ductus arteriosus, ventricular septal defect, coarctation, pulmonary stenosis, aortic and mitral valve defects and Fallot's tetralogy, in that order of frequency.

The first few chapters are devoted to the embryology of the heart, X-ray anatomy, techniques and to a brief summary of material to be studied. Thereafter each condition is taken in turn and the chapters follow each other in a repetitive pattern of clinical features and E.C.G., X-ray, electrokymography, cardiac catheterization, haemodynamics during exercise and angiography. This list may be abbreviated for a few uncommon conditions but the arrangement never alters. Each condition is illustrated with a profusion of photographs, diagrams, tracings and charts. At the end of the