

## BOOK REVIEWS

**Pediatric Dermatology.** By HENRY H. PERLMAN. (Pp. xii + 477; 203 figs. \$18.00; 135s.) Chicago: The Year Book Publishers Inc. British distributors: Interscience Publishers Ltd.

Dr. Perlman, who is Clinical Professor of Pediatrics at Jefferson Medical College and Associate Professor at the University of Pennsylvania, is to be commended for his courage and industry in writing a textbook on dermatology. While he writes primarily for paediatricians, general practitioners and students, many dermatologists would find the book a useful addition to their bookshelves, for good books upon paediatric dermatology are rare. The latter would find added interest in a work based upon the principles of paediatric medicine, with a secondary approach to dermatology. The author's wide experience in two specialties and in pharmacology gives him an unusual breadth of approach which is reflected in the excellent chapters on physical examination and history-taking that few of us can hope to emulate. His wisdom in advocating the simpler and well tried remedies is a fresh current of common sense throughout the chapters on treatment and topical remedies.

There follows some thought provoking observations on the skin hygiene of the newly-born and only aesthetic objections can be raised against the idea of leaving more to nature and not approaching godliness via soap and water unless the infant has a normal skin.

Inevitably an experienced dermatologist can find a few weak spots as critical reviewers find in our own writings. We found some confusion in the account of subcutaneous induration of the new born. Whilst a low olein content of the subcutaneous fat may lead to the formation of fatty crystals of a higher melting point and a granulomatous reaction to their presence, which we regard as the specific basis of sclerema neonatorum, subcutaneous fat necrosis in infants or adults is not related to the olein content and has a banal histology. Dr. A. M. H. Gray deserved a reference here.

No mention is made of agammaglobulinaemia which has been recorded in cases of dermatitis gangraenosa and probably accounts for the infant's grave susceptibility to infection. Injections of gamma globulin may be life saving in some cases.

Although the old and little used arsenical medication is included in the treatment of dermatitis herpetiformis, the more effective drug diamino-diphenylsulphone is omitted from the schedule of treatment. A better name for granuloma pyogenicum is granuloma telangiectaticum, for whereas the abundance of vascular tissue is obvious, the pyogenic factor can rarely be demonstrated.

It is stated that aphthous stomatitis is caused by the herpes virus. Harvey Blank and others have failed to confirm this aetiology.

Surely too much stress is put upon the treatment of strawberry marks and cavernous haemangiomas, most of which may more safely be left for the usual spontaneous resolution.

Lest we damn, by faint praise, in finding minor points of disagreement, which may be controversial in any case, let us add that this is a good book; the standard of printing, illustrations and binding is of the highest. It is almost pure American with perhaps too few references to the outside world literature. However, the standard of dermatological knowledge and progress is probably the highest in the U.S.A., and it merely remains to one who has suffered the pangs of book-birth to congratulate the author.

**Notes on Infant Feeding.** By STANLEY GRAHAM and ROBERT A. SHANKS. (Pp. 76. 4s. 6d.) Edinburgh: E. and S. Livingstone Ltd. 1960.

A hearty welcome can be given to another edition of this little book at the very reasonable price of 4s. 6d. It contains much useful advice and information which is concisely given and it can be recommended equally to the student and young doctor. Some of it seems a little old-fashioned and the Sassenach baby, for instance, nowadays seems to double his weight well before the six months the authors allow.

**Pathology of Infancy and Childhood.** By AGNES R. MACGREGOR. (Pp. 631; 388 figs. 75s.) Edinburgh and London: E. & S. Livingstone Ltd. 1960.

Agnes Macgregor of international renown is one of the foremost pioneers of paediatric pathology. Her colleagues in the United Kingdom especially owe much to her influence and this book places them further in her debt. As she says in the preface it is not intended primarily for those familiar with the subject but for those pathologists who deal only occasionally with paediatric problems. As such it fills a long-felt gap in the literature.

About one third is taken up with the perinatal period and congenital malformations. The remainder is devoted to the infective, degenerative, metabolic and neoplastic diseases which occur in later infancy and childhood. There are also short but extremely valuable chapters on blood diseases, accidental injuries and poisons.

Most of these subjects are dealt with inadequately in general pathological texts, but here they are given their proper emphasis. For this reason paediatricians and paediatric surgeons will find this an extremely useful book. The pathological aspects of almost all their clinical problems are described in one volume of convenient size.

Of particular interest to the occasional paediatric pathologist are the observations on sudden unexpected

deaths, the advice on perinatal autopsy technique and the tables of normal measurements found at the end of the book.

The text is well set out in clear print and is not interrupted by unnecessary detail. Important references are given at the end of each chapter and there is a complete index at the end of the book. The illustrations are well chosen and clear and those of the cardiac malformations and the whole lung slices are of particular merit.

This book should be included in the libraries of all paediatric and pathological departments.

**Le Syndrome D'Ellis-Van Creveld. Une forme de dysplasie chondro-ectodermique.** By L. DAYER. (Pp. iv + 59; 18 figs., 4 tables. sFr. 12.50.) Basel and New York: S. Karger. 1960.

The author has reviewed 33 published cases of the syndrome (ectodermal dysplasia, polydactyly, chondrodysplasia and congenital morbus cordis) and has added four personal observations showing either the complete syndrome or variants, e.g. punctate epiphyseal dysplasia. Of a total of 36 cases regarded as examples of the syndrome, 11 showed parental consanguinity and 10 belonged to five sibships, including one pair of dizygotic twins. Recessive inheritance which was postulated when the three original cases were reported in the *Archives of Disease in Childhood* in 1940 appears to be confirmed. Of the 36 cases reviewed, 18 were boys and 18 girls. The condition has now been described in children of Jewish, English, Dutch, French, Italian, Swiss, Turkish, Algerian, Tunisian, Anglo-Irish, coloured American and mixed parentage. Of the various features of the syndrome, congenital morbus cordis seems to be the least constant, being present in only 20 cases, and ectodermal defects the most constant. The author points out that the syndrome is one of a number in which chondral and ectodermal dysplasias coexist, and that transitional types occur.

**Child Development: An International Method Study.** Ed. A. HOTTINGER and H. BERGER. Modern Problems in Pediatrics, V. Supplement to *Annales Paediatrici*. (Pp. ix + 237; 20 figs. sFr. 50.-) Basel/New York: S. Karger A.G. 1960.

The reviewer is in the embarrassing position of being asked to write a testimonial for a favourite son and seven grandchildren. Nevertheless, he feels gratified at being able to commend this quite remarkable achievement of an international study which, fostered by the International Children's Centre in Paris, derived from the Child Study Centre in London, a product of collaboration between the University's Institutes of Education and Child Health. Nine chapters set out the history of the coordinated studies, the general considerations and lines of work, followed by three important sections on the

social, psychological and physical (somatic) investigations. A chapter on the special aspects of the problem in under-developed countries, and another on the effects of malnutrition on growth, takes the study out of Europe into West and East Africa. Dr. Faulkner's own, slightly different, present work in Louisville, Kentucky, marks the spread of the collaboration to the New World. An appendix of 100 pages gives some idea of the complexity of the data collected by reproducing the various forms in use. A study of these shows how necessary is the final chapter in the body of the volume on the practical problem of recording and analysing the completed schedules. Indeed the difficulties of getting corresponding growth studies started in eight centres seem small compared with the rapidly growing problem of what to do with the material collected. This is a valuable contribution to paediatric literature and an essential guide book for those embarking on growth and development studies. The whole text is in English, well presented and the volume beautifully produced. Professor Robert Debré contributes a characteristically charming foreword.

**Kinderheilkunde: Diagnostik-Therapie, Prophylaxe.** By ERWIN GRUNDLER and GERHARD SEIGE. (Pp. 846, 848 figures. DM. 29.-) Stuttgart: Hippokrates-Verlag. 1960.

This is a beautifully bound and printed synopsis of children's diseases, written in a telegraphic style. The synopsis includes a little on normal development, gives physiological values, describes infant feeding and the various immunizing procedures before the systematic description of the illnesses in childhood. It ends with a chapter of over 100 pages which gives an alphabetical list of all drugs used at present (and in the past), together with all the available proprietary preparations, giving doses, methods of administration, indications, mode of action and side-effects. For a synopsis the book is too voluminous. It would gain a great deal by drastic pruning of out-dated material. For example, it treats syphilis with arsenic and bismuth, advises deep x-ray therapy for hyperplasia of the thymus in infants and devotes a chapter to thymus lymphaticus. On the aetiology of infantile diarrhoea the concepts of exudative and neuropathic diathesis are still maintained and its dietary management is equally antiquated. Bed-wetting should not be treated by corporal punishment, but the example of good children should be constantly kept in front of the offender; favourite foods and other pleasures should be denied until the offenders mend their ways. One could give a long list of such quaint ideas. In summary this book includes all that is new without having discarded much from the past which is no longer tenable.