found among Mongols and Tatars, and has nothing to do with the clinical condition of mongolism. The term ‘Mongolian Idiocy’ should certainly now be abandoned since, as Ford himself points out, most of these children are of imbecile level. Also, tuberculosis is no longer very common later in childhood among children with mongolism. This edition went to press too soon to record the interesting new developments in regard to chromosome constitution.

Dr. Ford has done a great service to neurology. His book is an essential work of reference in this and related fields. It will continue to be of great assistance to the practitioner, the teacher and the research worker. The English is lucid and simple.


This book, by a Chicago paediatrician, who is Associate Professor of Paediatrics at North-Western University Medical School, is most refreshing. Written by one with a long experience of routine well-baby care as well as hospital and domiciliary paediatric practice, it is the successor of ‘Essentials of Infant Feeding for Physicians’ which was well known in the United States a few years ago. In this volume the author has emphasized and amplified those sections of the original book which proved most popular and helpful, and the title of the book has been appropriately changed.

The theory and practice of dietetics in the first year of life, including the newborn period, are thoroughly reviewed and discussed in a very satisfying, often humorous, down-to-earth manner by one who has clearly had a great deal of experience, not only with patients but also with parents, doctors and students.

Breast feeding and its present position in paediatric practice in the United States and many other countries are fully and objectively considered, though the management of the numerous minor breast disturbances which frequently arise in the puerperium, and often unnecessarily lead to weaning, has received too little attention. The author defies the fact that in the United States only 20% of babies are now being breast fed on discharge from maternity hospital, but he is encouraged by a reversal of this regrettable trend in the better educated sections of the community, such as university graduates.

Artificial feeding has been reviewed from its evolutionary aspect leading to the contemporary swing back of the pendulum to more fundamental, simpler methods, and the somewhat confused American scene with its 73 varieties of artificial infant foods has been arranged and coordinated into a rational picture.

The various food elements, proteins, fats, carbohydrates, minerals and vitamins, are considered in their modern context and many points which are new in a book on infant feeding attract the reader.

The section on mixed feeding is also a happy blend of the modern scientific approach and practical wisdom and experience and it is gratifying to find that the author, like most of the leading American and British paediatricians, sees no indication for introducing mixed feeding until the third or fourth month in the average infant, though it is rightly stressed that in this form of feeding, as in milk feeding, there are great individual variations.

The last chapter ‘Clinical Trivia and Philosophic Observations in an Every-Day Feeding Practice’ is an entertaining and intensely practical account of common misconceptions and minor problems. It will be particularly useful for students and young paediatricians and general practitioners in whose eyes some of these minor problems often loom large and may be very disturbing.

The 200 references will prove valuable for those who wish to pursue various points further. Although written for American paediatric practice this book will prove equally welcome and valuable in this and other English-speaking countries, for the basic principles of dietetics in infancy are similar everywhere.


In the foreword the author states that this little book is written for paediatricians in order to acquaint them with recent developments in paediatric urology. The main emphasis is on diagnosis; therapy and operations are only briefly mentioned.

The English reader will find this little monograph too short to be of much value to paediatricians; but it may be of some use to undergraduates and practitioners. It appears to be a little out of date; although written in 1960, many of the advances in paediatric urology during the last decade are not mentioned.

The first chapter contains brief descriptions of paediatric urology and diagnostic methods. It seems strange that x-ray cinematography and studies with the image intensifier, which have done so much to unravel some of the confusion surrounding paediatric urological conditions are not described at all, and that the micturating cysto-urethrogram, which is perhaps the most important of all radiological investigations in childhood, receives only scant mention.

Of the succeeding chapters, some, like the one on urinary infections and stone formation in the urinary tract, are very adequate, others, like the one on megaureters, ectopia vesicae, bladder neck obstruction and the neuropenic bladder, are somewhat out of date, especially when the treatment and indication for treatment are discussed.

It is, of course, difficult to compress such large and rapidly expanding subjects into a few pages, but it is not easy to understand why some extremely rare conditions like atresia of the urethra and congenital elephantiasis of the penis are described in some detail, and why some common lesions like phimosis and incompletely descended testicles are only very briefly mentioned.

The author has written a most readable and concise little monograph based on a comparatively small series of cases. The results mentioned in this book do not quite come up to those published by the larger Paediatric
Urological Centres in this country or the United States of America. One is therefore forced to agree with Doctor Zapp when he states that it is unfortunate that in Germany paediatric urology is not practised by specialists in this field, but remains an appendage to adult urology.


Intussusception is still a potential killer in young children, and anyone dealing regularly with this condition will find something of interest in Mark Ravitch’s book. It is the first of a new series of paediatric surgical monographs, and is based on the author’s experience at the Johns Hopkins Hospital, Baltimore.

The essential theme of the book is the treatment of intussusception by barium enema reduction. As soon as the diagnosis is made, an intravenous infusion is started. An ungreased 45 ml Foley bag catheter is inserted into the rectum, the balloon is inflated, and the buttocks tightly strapped. The catheter is connected to a reservoir of barium at a height of 3–3½ ft. above the table. Thereafter, reduction is performed under fluoroscopic control. When the ileum is seen to fill freely, reduction is complete.

This technique in Ravitch’s hands is curative in 70 to 75% of all cases. When reduction is incomplete (in 25 to 30%) it is completed by open operation through a McBurney incision, thus avoiding a centrally placed scar. Using this technique at the Johns Hopkins Hospital, in the 10 years from January 1948 to January 1958, there have been 52 cases, and no deaths. Incidentally, there were only two resections.

Ravitch is convinced, by his own experience and that of other clinics using this technique, that primary reduction by hydrostatic pressure is superior to and safer than open operation. Attention is drawn to the curious fact that the incidence of intussusception is much higher in Britain and Scandinavia than in the United States. There are only six to eight cases a year in Ravitch’s clinic, contrasting with 30 to 40 cases a year in any big Children’s Hospital in this country.

There is an excellent chapter on errors in diagnosis, leading to delay and even to death of the child. Common mistakes are misdiagnosing intussusception as dysentery, and preoccupation with an associated serious illness. This chapter contains much valuable information.

In the chapter on symptomatology and physical signs, the omission of ‘pallor’ is a curious one, since it is so common a feature.

There is a section on experimental studies on dogs, in whom intussusception was artificially induced. This proves that the apex of the returning limb of the intussusception is the first to go gangrenous. This also shows that micro-organisms can be found on the serosal surface of the bowel in from four to 48 hours, and the more completely the blood supply is arrested, the more rapidly do they pass through the bowel wall. This underlines the importance of antibiotic therapy.

Resection procedures are discussed. Almost every manoeuvre has been tried at some time. Primary resection and anastomosis is still the treatment of choice and holds the field today, but in the extremely ill baby or with oedematous bowel of doubtful viability, there is a place for a decompressive resection of the Mikulicz type, coupled perhaps with anastomosis. Resections in any single clinic are so few that comparison of results is, in Ravitch’s opinion, difficult.

Every clinic has experience of the child who arrives almost irretrievably moribund early in the disease. There is no full discussion in this book of that most important though still mysterious topic, the cause of death in this form of obstruction. There are no hints as to the possible aetiology of intussusception. This, too, remains a mystery.

The production as a whole is excellent, easy to read and profusely illustrated by first-class radiographic studies. There is a very full bibliography.

This book should be read by all those who are called upon to treat intussusception in childhood.


As its title implies, this book deals with clinical conditions arising in infancy. There are 20 chapters, the lengthiest of which deal with illnesses in the newborn, congenital defects, feeding problems, vitamin deficiencies, infectious diseases and modern therapy. A chapter is devoted to tetany, infections of the cranial contents and acrodynia. Other subjects dealt with include diseases of the respiratory, urinary, haemopoietic and integumentary systems and of the ear, nose, throat and eyes. Emphasis is on treatment, including prophylaxis considered against the background of health in infancy. Intended for the practitioner, the publication is essentially a reference book. It is based upon the combined experience of six clinicians who practise their different specialities at the Infant Clinic of the University of Freiburg i.Br. Sound material is presented in highly concentrated form. Illustrations number only eight and all relate to laboratory aids. There are no references but a selected bibliography is provided. The book is unlikely to appeal on any large scale to paediatricians or general practitioners in this country.