

## BOOK REVIEWS

### **Year Book of Pediatrics (1960-1961 Year Book Series).**

Edited by SYDNEY S. GELLIS. (Pp. 479; 92 figures. 60s.) Chicago: The Year Book Publishers; London: Interscience Publishers. 1960.

Anyone glancing through this Year Book will gain a rapid insight into what has been going on in children's medicine during the year. All branches of the subject are considered and the reader will end his perusal as up to date in surgery and pathology as in internal medicine.

The doctor with limited time for reading and restricted in foreign languages may regret that the Year Book does not give him more insight into Continental literature. He may speculate whether the high proportion of American papers abstracted is a true reflection of where most of the worthwhile new work is being done. He cannot but be grateful to the editor, however, for enabling him to do his year's reading in a rapidly progressing subject so agreeably in a couple of evenings.

Dr. Gellis is to be warmly congratulated for maintaining the high standard to which we have become accustomed in past years.

### **Protein and Amino-acid Requirements in Early Life.**

By L. EMMETT HOLT, JR., PAUL GYÖRGY, EDWARD L. PRATT, SELMA E. SNYDERMAN and WILLIAM M. WALLACE. (Pp. vii + 63; illustrated. \$1.00.) New York University Press. 1960.

This small monograph by a distinguished team of investigators, including Professor Emmett Holt, Jr., is intended to evaluate critically the available information regarding the protein and amino-acid needs in early life, in health and disease. Much of it is based on the authors' own findings, especially on the amino-acid requirements of infants.

The clinical effects of protein deficiency, especially kwashiorkor, are discussed as well as the effects of high protein diets. To the general reader, much of the interest will lie in the section on protein requirements of infants, rather than in the individual amino-acids, admittedly of greater theoretical than practical import. The authors' conclusion is that little is gained by feeding protein diets containing more than 2.0 g. protein per kg. body weight to normal full-term infants, or even to premature infants, although they are more cautious in regard to the latter.

Little mention is made of the considerable body of evidence, which has been published both in this country and the United States, in favour of a protein intake considerably greater for premature than for full-term infants. The report, however, will be useful in providing many interesting facts not easily found in the literature.

### **Congenital Malformations; A Ciba Foundation Symposium.**

Edited by G. E. W. WOLSTENHOLME. (Pp. xii + 308; 91 figures; 28 tables. 45s.) London: J. & A. Churchill. 1960.

Ciba Foundation symposia have gradually developed into authoritative discussions on subjects of current interest and importance, led by selected authorities and delivered to limited audiences. A selection in book form gives others the opportunity of having at their disposal reviews of recent work of high standard.

This volume reports the Symposium of January 1960, on 'Congenital Malformations', and contains 24 contributions, each with its own brief discussion and a final general discussion. Subjects cover a wide field and there is inevitable variation in interest and excellence. Almost, though not quite all, contributions are of absorbing interest to the general paediatrician, though the subjects tend to be treated esoterically and the reader needs to be already reasonably well up in the subject to follow the main speaker, let alone the discussion. The value in print of the discussions at the end of each chapter is debatable. Many of these make almost no additional contribution, but occasionally, as in that which follows the subject of environmental teratogenesis, the audience participate freely.

The binding, print and photo-reproductions are of American standards.

**The Medical Annual.** Issues 77 (pp. xl+620; 66 plates + 40 figures), 1959, and 78 (pp. li+572; 59 plates + 47 figures), 1960. Bristol: John Wright.

When stuck for some quickly available information on recent work the Medical Annual seems frequently to be able to assuage at least the worst of the need, and these two volumes for 1959 and 1960 are as useful as ever. The chapters on children's diseases review a selection of conditions, a kind of chef's collation particular to the author, Dr. Newns, but have sufficiently wide interest to make welcome food for other mouths. *Child Surgery* by R. E. Horton is largely concerned with neonatal abdominal surgery in 1959 and with various types of hernia in 1960, whilst *Child Psychiatry* by Dr. Kenneth Cameron deals with much the same subjects each year, particularly childhood dementia and the use of drugs with defective children. These three authors share between them less than 20 pages in each volume which seems inadequate and certainly limits their choice of subjects. However, articles of paediatric interest are widely dispersed throughout both volumes and, indeed, appear in almost every section.

The special articles, now a prominent feature of the Medical Annual, serve as valuable up-to-date summaries of their subject, and retain a high standard in paediatric