BOOK REVIEWS

Aspects it also provides a valuable source of information for the practising paediatrician, but unfortunately no references are given at the end of the chapters. This and the fact that the names of the contributors are omitted in the text conveys an impression of dogmatism, hardly justified in an exposition of recent developments, and which is further enhanced by the terse style and the frequent use of exclamation marks to stress an important point.

The contributors, who have been drawn almost exclusively from the large university clinics of Freiburg and Munich, have tried to pack as much information as possible into the allotted space and to achieve a comprehensive review of their subjects with the effect that sometimes a number of syndromes are mentioned with little more information than their eponyms. Such is the case, for instance, in the short chapter on cardiac hypertrophy in which Ayerza-Aprillaga, Pompe, Kugel-Stoloff and Wuhrmann eponymously appear.

Occasionally the results of experimental medicine are included where clinical confirmation is lacking, such as the use of orotic acid in the treatment of galactosaemia.

Interesting to note is the importance still attributed to the ‘Mehlnahrachsen’ as a factor in the aetiology of infantile malnutrition and the stress laid on focal infections such as mastoiditis in the causation of gastroenteritis.

Surprisingly short is the chapter on premature. To the German reader the reference to teething powders ‘Zahnpu der’ as a source of mercury in the causation of acrornia in England must sound rather puzzling since ‘Zahnpu der’ in German indicates a cleansing powder for teeth.

The general standard of the book is a high one and certainly does credit to the editors. If the reviewer would like to underline the excellence of the chapters on infectious diseases and metabolic disorders, it is not to detract from the value of the others. The publishers, Georg Thieme, have adopted the two-column lay-out of the Saunders’ publications, which adds to the pleasing appearance of the book. The 371 illustrations are first rate, the index reliable and exhaustive and misprints very rare.

There is no doubt that the book will be a valuable aid to all who want information on current pediatrics.


After a full and competent review of factors affecting the plasma bilirubin concentration in the newborn, Schellong has studied over 400 infants to determine the role of ABO iso-immunization, birth weight, post-maturity, neonatal weight and hypoglycaemia in the production of hyperbilirubinaemia.

He very rightly emphasizes the necessity for accurately determining bilirubin and the importance of precise calibration.

The work on iso-immunization appears to be particularly thorough. Schellong concludes that the infants who will show a marked rise of serum bilirubin, due to ABO iso-immunization, can be selected by an AB gamma globulin neutralization test.

The general standard of this work is high. There are few omissions, but the author does not appear to have seen Török and Szabo’s study of seasonal influences on levels of hyperbilirubinaemia.


A synopsis with nearly 900 pages of text sounds daunting, but this is really a shorter textbook rather than a synopsis. It reads smoothly, is clearly printed on good paper, is well set out and in most instances aptly illustrated (though the mongol child shown on p. 769 could hardly be diagnosed except by chromosome studies). Moreover, the French text gives the English paediatrician an opportunity to brush up his professional and linguistic knowledge at the same time, without unduly neglecting his family, his patients and his meetings.

The second edition of this well-known French book follows a pattern with which English paediatricians are familiar, though the unwary reader might think the table of contents had been omitted unless he looked at the end. The international approach of modern paediatrics is further illustrated by the fact that almost all the eponyms used would be found in any English book. A chapter on growth is followed by a description of the newborn period, then a presentation of diseases grouped by systems, and the book ends with an outline of emotional development and psychological disturbances.

The text is reasonably up to date, including, as an example, a reference to the French discovery of the additional chromosome in mongolism. It obviously does not cater for the specialist or consultant, and is not concerned with social or preventive paediatrics, but it gives a well-informed account of the diagnosis and treatment of sick children.


It is a great encouragement to all those interested in the progress of paediatric surgery to witness the increasing number of publications in which specific problems in childhood disease are considered from a joint medical and surgical viewpoint. This booklet, a collection of five talks given to a revision course which took place in Geneva in 1960 under the auspices of the Swiss Society of Paediatrics, reflects the current views on urological subjects of the great paediatric centres of Geneva, Berne and Zurich.

In review articles of this type, one would not expect a precise analysis of results, but several of these con-
tutions are somewhat vague in their approach, particularly one on cystometry, an investigation which has always suffered from a lack of precision. Many urologists, moreover, would regret the more extensive use of this method, as advocated here, as a preliminary to other more conventional studies in a wide variety of urological cases. Bettes and Nusslé review the problem of reflux, and Genton, the long-term prognosis of hydronephrosis, in two useful papers. Gautier contributes some valuable advice on the medical treatment of renal insufficiency due to congenital abnormalities. Finally, Girardet, Delarue and Rieschel give their experience of the bacteriological control of pyelonephritis, and give only cautious approval to the method of colony counts, which in some cases is both tedious and superfluous.


This beautifully produced volume is a record of the eighth annual scientific meeting of the Houston Neurological Society. A total of 343 of the 567 pages is devoted to hydrocephalus, including experimental production, genetics, pathological and radiological aspects, and clinical types. There are valuable contributions from workers from far afield, such as those of Donald Matson from Boston, George Anderson from Rhode Island, Julius Metrakos from Montreal, Sigvald Refsum from Oslo, and William Windle from Bethesda. Donald Matson contributes a useful chapter on the clinical evaluation of an infant with hydrocephalus, and Robert Pudenz writes a short section on the surgical treatment without, however, giving an account of the many clinical problems presented by the care of child with Spitz Holter valves and other shunts, or of the important and interesting pathological processes associated with them. It is to be regretted, in fact, that when the pathological aspect of hydrocephalus has been so comprehensively covered, the clinical side is too brief to be of great value.

Other sections of the book are devoted mainly to prenatal factors in relation to neurological disease, including brief discussions on the role of virus infections during pregnancy, on irradiation and on biochemical defects.

Many other important prenatal factors relevant to neurological disease are not mentioned, and much more detailed reviews of the role of virus infections and genetics are readily available elsewhere. Nevertheless, the chapters are authoritative and up to date.

This is not a clinical book, but it contains a great deal of useful information concerning the background of some of the neurological problems which confront paediatricians. Anyone concerned with such problems would certainly profit from reading this book, and should have it in his library.


This is the second edition of Dr. Leider's book which is aimed he says at busy paediatricians and general practitioners. It is plainly worth having a book of this sort because it provides a rapid answer to the question—'Does this disease occur in childhood?'—as well as looking at things from a special perspective. By p. 358 Dr. Leider has dealt with 120 common or important dermatoses, and in the final chapter he disposes of 100 minor or uncommon dermatoses. He provides numerous tables with tabulated information. Plainly a man of great experience, he knows and expresses the difficulty of dealing with the child (and its mother) afflicted with skin disease. His views on the relation of psyche to soma in dermatology are conservative and sound. He is well aware that dietary measures are not often helpful in the management of skin troubles. Thomas Bateman, in 1814, defined eczema as a non-contagious vesicular eruption, but Dr. Leider stretches the term to include vesicular virus diseases and fungus infections and yet, strangely, excludes infantile eczema (atopic dermatitis). Treatment is well covered and there is an excellent formulary of 101 preparations for topical application. Perhaps a word of warning should have been inserted about topical fluorohydrocortisone, since it may be absorbed and cause oedema. Also it may be questioned whether Fowler's solution should be recommended in the treatment of dermatitis herpetiformis in a child. Dr. Leider is interested and careful in the use of nomenclature, but he slips up in telling us that erythema contusiforme is another name for Bazin's disease; it is, in fact, another name for erythema nodosum and describes the bruise-like play of colour of the fading lesions. The book is well produced, well illustrated and well balanced, and it can be recommended.


In this short monograph the authors, after a general discussion on the various methods used for the qualitative and quantitative analysis of the amino acids present in urine and a review of publications on physiological and pathological aminoaciduria, report the results they have obtained with the Stein and Morre's method (column chromatography on ion exchange resin) on a small number of patients they have studied, six normal children, three premature babies and 14 other children with the following conditions: malnutrition with protein deficiency (four cases); cystinosis (two cases); phenylpyruvic oligophrenia (one case); alkaptonuria (one case); glycogen disease (one case); Marfan's syndrome (two cases); hyperazotaemic renal dwarfish (one case); somatic infantilism of unknown origin (one case); lead poisoning in infancy (one case).