Book Reviews


This addition to the many books recently written on cerebral palsy is a collection of contributions by 13 authors, edited by Dr. K. Lindemann, Professor of Orthopaedic Surgery in Heidelberg. The wide spectrum of the condition and its problems are considered in aspects ranging from the morphological types encountered and their probable aetiology to accounts of their clinical recognition, therapy and general management. Authors of individual chapters were given a free hand, and this has resulted in some repetition which could have been avoided. Only rarely is supportive data from personal material given. For purposes of comparison and evaluation this would have been a useful addition. The general layout, however, is clear, and minor criticisms do not detract from the overall excellence of the book.

Particularly commendable is Professor Zülch’s section in which clinical types are correlated with pathological findings, and both normal and abnormal movement patterns are discussed in the light of neurophysiology and infant development. The chapter on Neurology and Neurosurgery by W. Tönnis and W. Krenkel is complementary to that of Professor Zülch, giving an adequate, though somewhat didactic, description of the various clinical pictures, their diagnosis as well as their pharmacological and neurosurgical treatment. The optimism with which they view the beneficial effects of various muscle relaxants and tranquillizers is questionable and does not correspond with experience in this country.

Professor Lindemann’s considerable experience in the treatment of cerebral palsy as well as his profound understanding of the many problems involved makes his own contribution on the orthopaedic management of this condition particularly delightful reading. It is simply written. The reader is taken through the physical examination step by step, and findings are interpreted as he proceeds. His approach is essentially conservative with the accent on early and regular physiotherapy. Indications for surgical intervention are clearly given, and major procedures are only recommended after conservative measures have been given an adequate trial and have failed.

Physiotherapy is lucidly discussed by H. Thom, whose simple line drawings make for easy understanding of the reflexes involved and the therapeutic measures taken. His section on occupational therapy contains a great number of useful hints on special aids, and while these are unquestionably helpful the use and simple modification of ordinary household utensils and appliances could have been mentioned to advantage. Speech therapy unfortunately is dealt with rather cursorily both by him and by J. Berendes.

As befits the contributor from Vienna, H. Asperger gives an excellent account of the behaviour problems encountered in cerebral-palsied children. These as well as parental adjustments are sympathetically discussed.

School placement, choice of occupation, and social welfare provisions make interesting reading. The statutory obligations of local authorities closely follow those of other countries.

The general tenor of the book is perhaps best reflected in a quotation prefixing the chapter on the cerebral palsied child and its family—

‘Lord, give me strength,
That the mind achieve
What the heart yearns for.’

Each author has contributed in this kindly and perceptive attitude, and it is this that makes the book well worth recommending.


Conferences that bring together people from different disciplines interested in a special field of medicine are becoming increasingly fashionable. The published proceedings of such meetings serve the dual purposes of disseminating up-to-the-minute information and of recording valuable discussion between experts, which would not otherwise reach the attention of a wide audience. The book under review is a collection of papers read at the International Study Group on Child Neurology held at Oxford in 1962. It includes current views on the structure and function of the cerebellum, clinical and pathological descriptions of the ataxic syndromes of childhood, and details of some recent research on posture and movement. The contributions range from an authoritative account of the anatomy of the cerebellum by Professor Alf Brodal to two meager
papers on electroencephalography, which together scarcely cover four pages. Paediatricians will be particularly interested in the account of the recently described syndrome of ataxia-telangictasia by Elena Boder who first focused attention on this condition.

Like many reports of symposia, this volume has the merit of novelty but the defect of inconsistency. There is much to stimulate and interest the specialist and the general reader, but the quality and presentation of the papers is uneven and there is a dearth of the discussion which should be the main justification for such a publication. One cannot help wondering whether the same authors invited to contribute chapters to a planned book on the subject could not have achieved a more balanced and complete survey without sacrificing any of its freshness or appeal. Nevertheless, this is a book which must be read by those with special interest in the subject and will repay browsing by others less conversant with this branch of neurology.


This Year Book has now nearly 500 pages of abstracts of many of the best papers on paediatrics published in 1961 and 1962. As usual, a number of papers have been selected for comment and occasional clarification, or even expansion, by either the Editor or other informed commentators. Although, naturally, the majority of papers are American, it is good to see that more than one-third of the papers are non-American, and this spread of reading to give a better coverage of the world literature on paediatrics will be much appreciated everywhere.

As usual, the book is beautifully produced, and as much a credit as ever to the Editor and the Year Book Medical Publishers.


This handy little book contains a wealth of useful information in a concise and easily assimilable form. It covers virtually every practical problem one is likely to meet in paediatrics.

The first chapters deal with the special points relating to paediatric history-taking, normal growth and development, infant feeding and nutrition. Clinical investigations, taking each system in turn, are dealt with in subsequent chapters. Indication for the various tests as well as methods of collecting samples and brief outlines of pathological techniques are described. There are many tables of normal values which are very clearly set out. These should prove especially helpful. Perhaps the most valuable part of the book for the house physician is detailed description of common procedures, such as taking blood samples from various sites and intravenous therapy. Commonly encountered difficulties, e.g. how to, and when not to, restart the drip that has stopped, are discussed. Another chapter deals with electrolyte replacement and the management of paediatric emergencies, such as diabetic coma and adrenal cortical insufficiency. The instructions are clearly set out and precise. The fact that they are perforce dogmatic is, if anything, an advantage for a book of this size and scope. The section dealing with antibiotics is up to date and comprehensive and the section dealing with poisoning invaluable for the casualty department. The excellent index helps one to find the desired information quickly.

This book will certainly prove to be an invaluable reference manual for the busy paediatrician, registrar and house physician.


The publication of a new textbook on paediatric surgery is of considerable interest and emphasizes the increasing acceptance of the fact that surgery of children and particularly the surgery of the newborn presents special problems. The size of this book, over 1,200 pages in two volumes, and the table of contents are evidence of the scope of the specialty, and throughout the book there is ample indication that the best results in neonatal surgery particularly can only be obtained in specialist hospitals, where paediatric radiologists, anaesthetists, pathologists and surgeons can work in close association with paediatricians and with nurses expert in the care of the sick newborn baby.

This new textbook of paediatric surgery has five editors and over 70 contributors. An attempt was made to maintain uniformity amongst the large number of contributors by the distribution of a model chapter, but there is no doubt that in reading the book it was a pleasant relief to come upon chapters written by those who did not abide too closely by the rules. Contributors on the whole have expressed personal opinions, some are better than others at commenting on the work of others, and this is a point where one feels five editors had the opportunity of reviewing various methods of treatment and giving an unbiased opinion. It is a pity that some of the more senior paediatric surgeons in the United States are not contributors. The specialized sections on ophthalmology, oto-laryngology, orthopaedics and neurosurgery were deliberately restricted in size; the section on orthopaedics is so short in relation to the size of the subject that it might have been better omitted altogether, especially since there are no references in this section.

Perhaps the most remarkable feature of the publication is that there was rather less than two years from conception to delivery. This is a highly creditable performance,