but even in this short time some recent advances have been missed; for instance, chromosome abnormalities are mentioned only once in connexion with cleft lip and palate; and while there is no doubt that the results of the Swenson type of recto-sigmoidectomy for Hirschsprung's disease are very good, the Duhamel operation gets but a superficial mention and a rather inaccurate description. No reference at all could be found to a few rare conditions, such as foetal ascites, chylous ascites and nasal glioma.

It is easy for a reviewer to be destructive. In fact this is an excellent textbook with clear descriptions of embryological processes and physiological changes. The sections on the embryology of the heart and great vessels and on cardio-pulmonary physiology are of particular value.

The bibliography is extensive and the book should be of value to both surgeon and paediatrician. The presentation is excellent, illustrations both line and half-tone being of high quality, and very few printing errors were found. A work of this size and quality is an expensive production, but for the paediatrician of high quality, and for the paediatrician and for the general surgeon and also the paediatrician it will be a very valuable reference.

Le Mégacôlon Congénital: Diagnostic et Traitement.

Professor Roviralta and his colleagues have produced an informative and up-to-date book and have succeeded in their aim to set out the current views on congenital megacolon and allied conditions. The diagnosis and management at different ages are fully discussed with emphasis on the value of the retrorectal and transanal procedure (Duhamel operation) in the first few months of life.

The historical notes are of interest and chapters on radiology and biopsy are useful and well illustrated. The chapter entitled ‘considérations diverses’ is good; therein the familial and psychic aspects of the disease and the clinico-pathological variations of megacolon and megarectum are described; in addition the complications and results after operation are given.

The lengthy bibliography, containing nearly 350 references, indicates the wide scope of this review. The opinions of numerous authorities overshadow the authors’ experience and give the book an impersonal approach. Nevertheless, the writers present all aspects of this complex disease in a simple manner, and both paediatric physicians and surgeons will find this book from Barcelona full of helpful information.


The first edition of this book was published in 1945. Revisions have been thorough and the present fifth edition in 17 years maintains the excellence one has come to expect in this standard work. Primarily written for speech therapists, it is of value to many others interested in the management of children with cleft palate including surgeons, paediatricians, and clinic and school medical officers. The entire subject is concisely covered from a historical survey of treatment of the cleft to a practical account of the scope of speech therapy. Therapy is considered in relation to the whole management of the patient in proper perspective and in a factual down-to-earth manner. The management of clefts has progressed far since the first edition appeared and to quote from the Preface to this fifth edition ‘speech therapy is changing from a hopeless struggle against insuperable odds to achieve speech, which was at least intelligible, to that of post-operative observation and assessment of speech which is developing gradually but surely towards the normal’. Miss Morley deserves our gratitude for keeping this admirable book up to date.


‘Someone must defend the child against the system’, quotes a paediatrician in the foreword, and the author of this small book describes how an effective defence has been organized in a general hospital in America. In most American hospitals, as in Britain where paediatricians are among the pioneers in this field, the defences tend to be more haphazard, more dependent on the individual doctor’s interest. Mrs. Plank, who was trained as a teacher and later studied under Maria Montessori and Anna Freud, presents a programme of ‘child care’ which proved so successful that it has become integrated in the day-to-day work of a hospital paediatric department. It is based on the ‘child care worker’, an active member of the ‘clinical team’, who is specially trained to combine the functions of ‘play lady’, comforter, explainer and teacher for children in hospital.

To minimize distortion of the child’s normal pattern of living and development, which may be caused by the combination of illness and separation from the family, hospital care should not be restricted to the too narrow function of curing diseases. Accepting this basic assumption, as most paediatricians have come to do nowadays, the author provides a simple and practical description of a system for the co-ordinated management of children in hospital. Chapters on preparing the child for coming into hospital and for operation, on death in the ward, on play, on activities and on learning are followed by a ‘child life and education programme’ which deals in turn with out-patient clinics, in-patient wards, long-term convalescent wards, rehabilitation and acute infectious wards. Appendices are added with details of crafts, equipment and information to parents, which will be usefully compared with hospital practice here.

I should hesitate to adopt the implications of the last