BOOK REVIEWS

but even in this short time some recent advances have
been missed; for instance, chromosome abnormalities
are mentioned once only 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 con-
ditions, 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 presen-
tation 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 paediatric and for the general
surgeon and also the paediatrician it will be a very
valuable reference.

Le Mégacôlon Congénital: Diagnostic et Traitement.

By EMILIO ROVIRALTA and JOSÉ M. CASAS. French
adaptation by Bernard Duhamel and Christian
de Groote. (Pp. 136; 38 figures. 32 NF.) Paris:
Masson et Cie. 1962.

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 mega-
rectum 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.

Cleft Palate and Speech. 5th ed. By MURIEL E. MORLEY.

(Pp. xx + 279; 88 figures. 27s. 6d.) Edinburgh and

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.

Working with Children in Hospitals. A Guide for the
Professional Team. By EMMA N. PLANK, with the
assistance of Marlene A. Ritchie. (Pp. v + 86;
illustrated.) Cleveland, Ohio: The Press of Western
Reserve University. 1962.

‘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 paediatrici-
ans 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’, com-
forter, 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 manage-
ment 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
appendix, with its samples of 'physiological drawings': teaching children how their bodies function might better be undertaken when they are not ill and away from home. I found no reference by the author to an out-patient appointment system, such as has proved so helpful in this country.

The subtitle of this readable attractive book is: 'A Guide for the Professional Team'. The author gives well-considered and helpful guidance, not only for formal teams, but for all those individuals in the medical, auxiliary and administrative services, who work for and think about children in hospitals.

Grundriss der Pathologischen Embryologie des Menschen.

Recent concern with drug-induced abnormalities in foetal development makes this monograph timely, for it serves to draw attention to the wide range of conditions — some without any apparent deleterious effect upon the mother — under which disturbances of embryogenesis can take place.

An early chapter deals with natural abortion, which in England, Germany and the United States is believed to involve the death of some 10% of all fertilized ova, and with its frequency in the successive weeks of pregnancy. The large majority take place during the first trimester, and male foetuses are lost some four times more commonly than female. One long chapter surveys the possible teratogenic actions of such adverse factors as temperature changes, hypoxia, ionizing radiation, toxic chemicals, undernutrition, hormonal influences and infections. Much of the material incorporated has been obtained from animal experiments in which the action of the teratogenic agent has been pressed more severely than it is ever likely to operate in man. Indeed, references to human instances of their action are for the most part incidental.

The morphological features of abortion are dealt with in a long chapter which contains many illustrations obtained from human material. The peculiar hazards found at two critical periods are emphasized: the former during the first few days of gestation and the second between the third and the sixth weeks. Much of the later part of the monograph is concerned with the vital staining, histochemistry and hormonal activities of the placenta.

The book is a translation into German of a Russian monograph published at Lvov in 1959. It contains nearly a thousand references of which about one-third are to articles in Russian; the rest are widely distributed in the publications of most western countries. The format is fair, and the illustrations — many from borrowed sources — are well reproduced. The monograph could be useful to those interested in the problems of foetal malformations and abortion.


The third edition of Dunham’s Premature Infants is necessarily a larger volume than the second edition of 1955. It retains the same basic organization of three main sections. Part 1 deals with general considerations, Part 2 with clinical aspects and Part 3 with public health. Part 2 has been further divided into two sections. The first of these contains seven chapters dealing with the care of premature infants, and the second contains 11 chapters on abnormal conditions, their signs, symptoms and treatment.

It is this clinical part that has been swelled by the inclusion of much of the new information that has been gained over the past few years. There is a long chapter on retrolental fibroplasia, a new chapter on the infants of diabetic mothers and a wealth of detail about respiratory distress syndrome. It is disappointing that the latter does not include more details regarding the treatment of this condition but it is the policy of the author not to be dogmatic about controversial subjects.

A number of appendices giving data on normal values and techniques completes the book.

Despite the increase in the amount of information given, the book remains very readable and is presented in a convenient size for handling. Clear sub-headings, good print and excellent charts and photographs make for easy reference. No aspect of health or disease is left unconsidered and controversial points of view are clearly represented. The succinct script allows a rapid appraisal of the diagnosis and treatment of abnormal states and the daily problems of nursery management. The practice and experience of the Babies’ Hospital, New York, is quoted wherever controversy does not allow an unequivocal recommendation and serves as a guide for those who require it. The conciseness at times gives rise to a brevity amounting almost to incompleteness, but if the text is wanting this is made good by the excellent bibliography (about 1,500 references in all).

Reference to other parts of the book by chapter rather than page is annoying and the index occasionally inadequate, but these criticisms do not detract from the pleasure in reading this very informative text.