interpreted as 'retardation', regression or reversion to a more infantile behaviour pattern, as is frequently done. He warns against its many pitfalls, particularly in the hands of the inexperienced, and he does not advise its routine use.

The style in which the booklet is written, as well as the innumerable references included in the text, do not make for easy reading. To those interested in the Rorschach test, however, it should have value as an authoritative treatise.

On the positive side, his vigorous attempt to apply new ideas to old and difficult problems is to be recommended, particularly when, like Kephart and Cruickshank, he is widening the field of study.

The book is well produced and nicely illustrated, but the text is unclear, repetitive and full of jargon.


The term 'maternal deprivation' has now become one of the clichés of modern paediatrics, sociology and popular journalism. It is applied equally to children whose mothers go to work and to children who spend months or years in poorly-run institutions. By stretching the definition it can even be applied to children living in their own homes whose mothers somehow fail to live up to the standards expected of them by their betters.

Ever since Bowlby's monograph, published by W.H.O. in 1951, a number of workers have been at pains to clarify and to criticize the author's rather sweeping conclusions and theories. Indeed the World Health Organization itself has recently published a further report (1962) in which a number of authors enumerate theoretical and experimental objections to Bowlby's original concepts and the Bowlby thesis itself is somewhat modified. The book by Patton and Gardner at once therefore merits the criticism that it continues to use the term 'maternal deprivation' in a vague and undefined way and ascribes to it a large number of physical and emotional changes in a group of six children. These six children were all admitted to hospital for investigation because of 'failure to thrive'. All of them came from grossly disturbed home backgrounds. In all, the children were very small and growth failure was evidenced not only by marked underweight but also by severe delay in bone age development. But it is clear from the description of the home backgrounds that a number of different factors may have been operating; physical neglect, including insufficient food; possibly deliberate cruelty; almost certainly recurrent infections and, in addition, emotional rejection including, in one case, positive disgust towards the child. The book lists these and other postulated factors that might account for the delay in growth but comes to no conclusion about which might be the most important. Were the children offered enough to eat? Did they eat enough yet fail to grow? Or was their appetite poor? And if so, was it poor because of their emotional rejection or neglect or because of recurrent illness? No answer is forthcoming from the study of these children.

Surely it is time to drop the word 'maternal' in the whole context of this type of problem with its emotive overtones of mystical and eternal 'mother-love' (why not 'father-love'?) and to qualify the use of the word 'deprivation' by exact and careful descriptions of the actual situations in which children are cared for. The gross disturbances in these children's lives do not lend
themselves to such exact description, and this book therefore really adds very little to the understanding of children's needs and the effects of failure to supply one or more of them.

One interesting comment on the general Bowlby thesis does appear from the results, however, even in this small group. All the children except one responded immediately and rapidly on admission to hospital, where they were cared for by the general nursing staff. This means that they were looked after by a number of people and not by one single mother substitute, yet their response was dramatic. The authors regrettably fail to draw the important conclusion that a large number of children can develop normally and remain both physically and mentally healthy when looked after by a number of people at one time. Both Margaret Mead's own cross-cultural studies (1962) and other studies such as those of Terence Moore in London (1963) have shown that the care of a child may be shared between two or more people without any harm.

There is a useful summing up in the book of the literature on experimental and observational aspects of 'deprivation' and the book itself is beautifully produced and printed. Its cost, however—five dollars and seventy-five cents—is fantastic, particularly compared with the W.H.O. pamphlet which contains both more and better balanced material and costs two dollars.

References


This translation of a Russian book on cerebral palsy will be of the greatest interest to those working with spastic children. It cannot of course be recommended as a text for less experienced readers in this country, for although it contains much sensible advice, the general approach to the subject, and especially to the neuro-physiological basis of cerebral palsy, is understandably different from ours. Indeed, it is surprising that so many of the authors' ideas are in agreement with those of the English-speaking world, for the reference list indicates that nearly all their inspiration is drawn from Russian sources. Thus, of 149 references less than a score come from outside the Soviet Union, and only four from the United States or Britain.

The principal recommendations for the management of cerebral palsy are in line with modern British practice. The authors advocate prolonged and purposeful treatment by a team of specialists, active participation by the child and his parents and limited use of orthopaedic operations. They write of the need for modifying exercises according to the type of cerebral palsy, of the risks of developing contractures and of the value of speech therapy. The major difference in emphasis is the Russian dependence on drugs of the anticholinesterase group. Indeed, the greater part of the book is concerned with the use of galanthamine as the basis of treatment of 76 children with cerebral palsy. Very high claims are made for this Russian drug, which is not available in this country. Thus it is said to facilitate resumption of activity by functional systems which have been inactive, which 'changes and sometimes even destroys pathological functional systems which had been created'. The drug is said to restore motor processes and to cause the disappearance of pathological slow activity from the electroencephalogram. The concept that functional reconstruction of the damaged central nervous system can take place in this way is perhaps the most interesting aspect of this Russian view of cerebral palsy.

It would be interesting to know the extent to which the methods described here are used in the U.S.S.R. and something of the organization of cerebral palsy services to the community. The book is well translated and edited, and is pleasant to read despite some of the unfamiliar terminology.


Doctors in practice have always been concerned at least as much with the person who is ill as with diseases that exist in unsullied purity only in the examination hall. It is a good prognostic sign for the health both of family practice and paediatrics that the child, as an individual who yet remains part of his family and community, is now increasingly attracting the interest of academic branches of the profession. The whole child, rather than artificially isolated organs or tissues, body or mind, is being studied increasingly, and reports are becoming more readily available as articles or as books. But there is an obvious temptation to jump on the band wagon, and claims for a comprehensive or psychosomatic approach are no guarantee against one-sidedness.

This book does not give a truly balanced view of the many factors that play a part in childhood asthma. A comprehensive presentation is not achieved and may not even have been intended, for the book is written by 17 psychiatrified orientated contributors and by one allergist. How many doctors would find useful in practice the psychoanalytic theory which pervades many of the chapters?—and how many can still subscribe to the view (p. 4) that 'skin tests for allergy have been solely responsible for the considerable progress made in the total management of asthma'? Though many facts of considerable interest are presented in this book, some of the theories and interpretations would raise the eyebrows of many readers, in this country at least.