
This book is an English translation of 'Biochemische Befunde in der differential Diagnose innerer Krankheiten'. The purpose of this book is wholly admirable since it has been written 'to help the clinician make proper use of the laboratory'. The editors have attempted to classify the important biochemical findings in internal diseases, since clinical chemistry is playing an increasing role in medicine.

Unfortunately, classification has been carried too far and has resulted in inaccuracies and, indeed, in frankly incorrect statements. If the results of chemical estimations were as clear-cut as this book implies, the clinician's task would indeed be an easy one! This criticism is not true of the whole of the book and the chapters on liver and renal diseases are helpful.

Some of the material which is included is out of date, e.g., biological methods that have now been replaced by chemical estimations.

The book would not be very helpful to paediatricians since it is orientated towards adult medicine. The inborn errors are dealt with only briefly, and statements on such topics as lactosuria and sucrosuria are incorrect as far as children are concerned.


'Magen-Darm Erkrankungen bei Kindern' comprises volumes 7 and 8 in the series of 'Postgraduate courses in Pediatrics' edited by Professor E. Rossi, head of the University Children's Clinic in Bern. Not unnaturally 5 of the 10 chapters are written by Bernese contributors, while the others come from Zürich, Basel and Hamburg.

Although these volumes are largely meant for the German-speaking paediatrician in practice without hospital responsibilities, they are of a standard high enough to offer a great deal even to the consultant paediatrician. Aimed at providing an up-to-date review of certain disease problems and at offering guidance as far as modern treatment is concerned, they certainly succeed in their task. Advances in physiology, biochemistry and radiology are included where these have added to our understanding of disturbances of the alimentary tract.

Helpful also are the well-selected references to recent literature at the end of the chapters, but for no apparent reason they are omitted after the article by K. H. Schafer on painful abdominal syndromes in childhood, after Barandun's contribution on 'protein losing enteropathy' and Hottinger's account of coeliac disease. What is more on page 101 there is a photograph of the most appetizing cakes and biscuits made of gliadin-free flour, according to recipes published by H. Berger; but alas the appetite must remain unsatisfied because of the missing references.

Of the many X-ray reproductions the majority are good, some are fair and a few are poor, but even in these an arrow pointing towards the diagnostic finding might have been of help.

Radiological examination of the alimentary tract seems to have been used successfully by Schafer in the elucidation of the vexing problem of abdominal pain in children and positive results were obtained in 80%. Special consideration is given to the 'non-sclerosing terminal ileitis' or Golden's disease (a condition that is probably synonymous with acute mesenteric adenitis) and surprisingly to its X-ray diagnosis.

The print is pleasing, the arrangement of the subject matter clear, but there is no index, only a list of contents.

On the whole the volume makes useful and rewarding reading.


As the story of tuberculosis unfolds in the pages of this splendid book older physicians will recall vigorous disputes about the pathogenesis of clinical and radiological signs while some younger physicians, who read carefully, may sense something of the excitement of these intellectual tussles. Even among the authors of the book some divergences can be found, the medical group favouring only antibiotics and steroids in the treatment of emphysema, segmental lesions and bronchial erosions, while their surgical colleagues recommend surgical evacuation of caseous glands in the same conditions. Nor would all paediatricians agree that a segmental lesion is best regarded as an aspiration tuberculous pneumonia and that pressure from enlarged nodes with simple absorption collapse is a very uncommon cause of segmental lesions.

The thoroughness of investigation and follow-up which is described and practised by this experienced team must command immense respect and establishes their authority
for the claims made in each chapter. The first part of the book is devoted to the evolution of knowledge about the disease and its recognition. In these chapters there is an aggravating, but perhaps unavoidable, habit of referring to illustrations much further on in the book, which require distracting search to locate. There follow chapters describing the clinical manifestations of tuberculosis in childhood. This is the kernel of the book. The account is clear, though in places repetitive, and since no one working in this country can ever again see such a range of clinical material there is a classic quality in these chapters. In addition to detailed discussion of the more common types of tuberculous disease the authors display their exceptionally wide experience of primary lesions in the skin and mouth, many of which are beautifully illustrated. These middle chapters will prove increasingly valuable as a source of reference in future years. Treatment is dealt with in proper detail and clear advice given upon the use of the well-known antibiotics and of steroids, but there is very little about the newer anti-tuberculous drugs. The volume ends with 120 pages devoted to a large series of illustrative case histories, an extensive bibliography and an excellent index.

Though expensive the book deserves, and will obtain, an important place in all paediatric libraries in this and many other countries. It is extremely well produced with many illustrations of excellent quality and with a freedom from missprints and mistakes that indicates meticulously careful proof reading.


This is a sizeable book of over 700 pages, that forms the first volume in a comprehensive textbook of radiodiagnosis. It is the work of a panel of German radiologists and clinicians whose various contributions appear to have been welded together satisfactorily by the editor. There is a good combination of embryology, pathology, clinical features and radiology. The subject matter is general in that it refers to all ages and it is not a specialized paediatric textbook. However, many of the topics likely to interest the paediatric radiologist and paediatrician are included, although perhaps not in quite the detail that they would find most useful.

The text is reasonably easy to follow for the reader whose German is limited. The radiographic illustrations are printed as positives, but nevertheless they are very good in quality and very numerous. Indeed, the pictures by themselves make the book quite worthwhile.


I enjoyed reading Mrs. Rosar's book and I feel that it has a very definite and useful place in the library of any practising paediatrician, and it would be extremely useful in any paediatric department where the problem of Perthes disease is likely to be met. It is well illustrated and the technical jargon is simply and clearly explained in language that can be easily understood by a lay person.

It was interesting and informative to read how the problem is dealt with and what appliances are available for the care of these children in America. There are many of these appliances that I feel certain could be used with advantage in this country, although one wonders whether the Ministry would extend their help to such things as a paddle board, stroller, rolling bed, and baby-table in addition to a wheelchair.

I think the short sections dealing with the emotional health of the family, which includes advice to father, mother and the other children, and the psychological disturbances that might cause undue stress upon the marriage, particularly useful.

Perhaps the only criticism that one can make of a book of this character is that it is maybe a little too elaborate to be supplied to every parent in this country, and one feels that the use of the phrase 'A mother awakened one morning to find that she is to meet a day of horror' and that there is 'terrible news that her boy has catastrophic hip disease' is rather over-dramatizing the problems.

I shall certainly acquire a copy for my own use, because, although Perthes forms a small section of diseases of the hip in children, it is one of the more hopeful complaints that we have to treat, and it is extremely useful to have such a well-illustrated, neatly-sectioned book both of reference and explanation available to inform worried and anxious parents.