BOOK REVIEWS

modern understanding of the metabolism of bile pigments and its application to the problems of erythroblastosis and kernicterus are clearly unfolded.

If the purchaser of "Foetal and Neonatal Pathology" is intending to acquire a textbook in which a search will be successful in obtaining something informative on almost any aspect or detail of the pathology of this field, then he will not be disappointed; this is a comprehensive account of the subject. Nevertheless it is not a complete account; the covers of a single volume could scarcely be expected to enclose the exhaustive compilation that would nowadays be needed. Thus the pathologist looking to find a fully illustrated account of the histology of microgyria, or even of galactosaemia, may feel disappointed; in other words, this is neither an atlas nor a laboratory manual. The strength of this book lies in the skill with which Dr. Morrison has presented both clinician and pathologist with a discipline of thought that will guide them and illuminate their pronouncements when they are confronted with the day-to-day problems arising in the course of teaching or the practice of perinatal physiology or pathology.

Finally, this reviewer can fully endorse the publisher’s statement that ‘pathologists ..., paediatricians and obstetricians will find it both interesting and instructive reading and a most useful source of references’, and would add that this work is indeed a non-pariel among textbooks of pathology.


The central themes of this monograph are the auditory approach to the training of deaf children, the need for early recognition of deafness, and the utilization of the remaining hearing.

It should be read by everyone who has to deal with children whether belonging to the medical profession, or those professions that provide its ancillary services. Perhaps the authors are a little over-optimistic about the paucity of children who will fail to respond to their method of auditory training, but this is a good fault and one shared by most pioneers. Without it new methods and new theories would seldom be adopted.

It gives a thorough survey of deafness in children stating all its known causes. The descriptions of the varied syndromes where deafness occurs are useful.

The chapters on the methods of testing hearing in young infants are excellent and well illustrated, and they show how by early recognition of deafness and the utilization of the remaining hearing, even the severely deafened child can be taught to talk and take his place in normal school and adult life, provided the training is started early enough. Diagnosis should be established before the first year is over, and when established or suspected, a hearing aid should be fitted even at the age of only a few months. If any doubt exists as to deafness, no harm can be done by fitting a hearing aid, but its absence may permanently deprive the child of learning speech properly if the deafness is not helped during the period when the child normally learns to speak.

A child who is deaf must be taught to hear, and therefore the deafness will generally be found to be less severe after training than originally suspected.

There is a very useful chapter on hearing aids. A plea is made for something stronger than the Medresco and also for automatic volume control where recruitment is present, as it so often is in severely deaf children.

An aid in each ear is often required, and perhaps we should look at it as we do in correcting vision where we would never, on account of economy, think of giving glasses for one eye only.

To sum up, this work is a well-substantiated plea for the early recognition of deafness, and for the aural training of children so affected.


Great advances have been made in recent years in the early detection of deafness in children and in the provision of small, powerful hearing aids. The value of these advances is, however, limited unless they are accompanied by immediate educational help to the child concerned. As with all handicapped children, the severely deaf child has to be painstakingly taught those skills that come quite easily to the ordinary child. In the first place the severely deaf child has to be taught to hear, that is to make use of the residue of hearing that most of them have, with the help of a hearing aid and other amplifiers. Then they have to be taught the significance of what they hear and so develop language.

The emphasis in this very practical book, written by a teacher of deaf of great experience, is on the development of spoken language as the keystone of the deaf child’s education. This training in language starts as soon as deafness is diagnosed, and since this is likely to be below the age of 18 months nowadays, the part that the parents must play, as the author often emphasizes, is very important. Many useful teaching techniques are described; techniques that can be integrated with the child’s everyday life and made fully meaningful to him.

Although the subject of pre-school deaf management is well covered in the U.K. by such writers as the Ewings, many parents, teachers, and audiologists, will find this book most helpful, particularly in respect of the detailed teaching techniques. It is a long and detailed work, necessarily so because the teaching of language to the severely deaf child is a long and detailed process. Without this teaching the severely deaf child can barely become human.


In their preface, the authors state 'The Aphasia Handbook has been designed for anyone who may encounter the problem of retraining an aphasic—
professional therapists, teachers and family members. It provides orientation for college students of speech therapy and for professional people working in related fields of specialized education and rehabilitation. The book is divided into two parts, the first of which is concerned with aphasia in adults and the second with aphasia in children.

The first part of the book is more successful than the second. The authors write simply and answer many of the questions that intelligent laymen ask about aphasia. The simple accounts of the emotional problems of adults with aphasia is particularly good. The chapters on clinical assessment and therapy are less satisfactory. The need for detailed medical history taking and examination as a basis for the studies carried out by the speech pathologist is insufficiently stressed. The tests of language function and methods of therapy as suggested in later chapters should only be used by those qualified by training and experience to care for patients suffering from aphasia.

The authors open the second half of the book by asking ‘What is an aphasic child?’ They answer their own question as follows: ‘The aphasic child is one who fails to develop adequate language or one who has sustained a loss of acquired language due to brain injury’ (page 179). Unfortunately, they do not offer any systematic further classification of aphasia in childhood and this greatly limits the value of later chapters.

The main value of this book is likely to be the descriptions given of assessment tests, therapy material, and the lists of addresses where more information about them can be obtained. The book is very well produced though it is expensive.

Speech and Language Delay.  A Home Training Program.


This is a practical guide to home training for parents of children with speech defects written by two speech therapists with obvious enthusiasm for their work. The book begins with a simple outline of normal speech and language development. There follow chapters on various aspects of speech-training in the home environment and a brief section on the special needs of children with hearing defects. There are a number of references to the literature and a list of books and recordings suitable for the children.

Aimed at readers who are untrained but literate the book combines the common-sense approach with the right amount of do’s and don’ts in the tradition of Spock. Most of the recommended training programme is orthodox, i.e. the establishment of rapport, the constant use of speech by the parent in every home situation, and the stimulation of the child’s interest and self-expression by play activities of the nursery school type. However, here it all is, set out in a simple and practical way for parents who are not nursery school teachers and are anxious to learn the right thing to do.

Excellent quality paper and numerous charming photographs are presumably responsible for the high price of this book and a paper-back edition at one-tenth of the price might be more appropriate. As it is, the market for this publication will probably be in the more affluent transatlantic society whence it came.

Developmental Dyslexia.  By MACDONALD CRITCHLEY.


Probably most paediatricians have shared with this reviewer a desire to know what the established facts about dyslexia are, and have been puzzled where the truth may lie between the views of those psychiatrists who have pooh-poohed the existence of any such condition, and of those educationalists who have quoted figures as high as 10% for the number of dyslexics in the school population. Such inquirers will find their needs well catered for in this highly readable monograph, which, though quite short (89 pages), is a distillate of a very large volume of information, with a bibliography of over 400 references. The many illustrations include some interesting examples of dyslexics of the past, amongst them Hans Christian Andersen, and various monarchs including Karl XI, one of the kings of Sweden in the seventeenth century.

The author, a neurologist, concludes that in the heart of the community of poor readers there is a small hard core of cases where the tendency to the learning defect is inborn and independent of any intellectual inadequacies, emotional factors, educational or linguistic shortcomings which may happen to coexist. Such are the cases which neurologists speak of as examples of specific or developmental dyslexia. How large the problem is cannot be confidently stated in the absence of large-scale surveys of retarded readers, with a satisfactory analytic breakdown by neurologists and their team of ancillary experts.

To reach dyslexics to read seems to require little special expertise, merely a full measure of the ordinary pedagogic virtues, i.e. patience, an ability to maintain the pupils’ interest when progress is discouragingly slow, and a willingness to be empirical and to adopt any method that ‘works’. A useful account is given of the unrivalled experience of the Copenhagen ‘Ordeblinde Institut’, founded in 1935, where 100 word blind pupils are taught.

This admirable monograph comes at a time when fresh interest in the teaching of reading has been aroused in this country by the Pitman alphabet.