children's hospital and department. It will not replace Ford but it is a useful supplement and a not inconsiderable competitor.


Years of ownership of successive editions of 'Griffith-Mitchell' and later 'Nelson' (usually of two copies, one at home and one at hospital), and the countless times your reviewer has turned to the book to look up facts, has gradually engendered in him a profound admiration for its qualities. These qualities are the comprehensive cover of the subject, so that it is rare not to find what one needs in the index; the balanced presentation of difficult, obscure, or controversial subjects; the intelligent choice of relatively few but key references; the remarkably uniform and effective literary style, terse without being staccato; and the 'up-to-dateness' made possible by a new edition every five years or so. The editor's ability to impose these qualities on all 85 contributors is indeed marvellous.

The new (8th) edition will certainly maintain the richly deserved success of its predecessors.


On setting out to write a textbook, the author's first rule should be to keep clearly in mind who his readers are going to be, and whom he is aiming to instruct. It is almost impossible to write effectively for more than one class of reader at once, but Professor Hutchison has aimed at doing so. He states that his intention was to produce a book intermediate in size between the usual undergraduate text and the large work of reference, yet covering the problems of the paediatrician and the family doctor. In the event he has written a textbook, parts of which are sufficiently detailed to be of use to the paediatrician (e.g. the clearly explained biochemistry of the metabolic disorders) but most of which is likely to be more valuable for the paediatric house officer or postgraduate student with some previous knowledge of paediatrics. Surely it is not a family doctor's book, for the author has purposely omitted so much that would be of importance for him? There is no section on the common infectious fevers, skin diseases or ear and eye disorders, and the word 'worms' does not appear in the index. No account of the normal child and how to assess deviation from normal development is included.

With these reservations, the book is carefully planned and well written. The word 'Practical' in the title is justified by the attention to detail in describing methods of diagnosis and treatment, including dosage of drugs. This is usually given on a bodyweight basis, though occasionally the dose recommended aims to ignore the age and size of the child, e.g. morphine gr. 1/6 (10 mg.) as part of the treatment of left ventricular failure in acute nephritis.

The metabolic and endocrine disorders are described with a clarity that is unusual in general textbooks of paediatrics. Enough biochemistry is included to explain the errors involved without drowning the reader in a sea of complex formulae. The advice on infant feeding is brief and reflects the author's individual views on the subject, which are easy to follow. The chapter on emotional disorders is the least valuable and perhaps reflects an outdated approach in dealing mainly with such things as thumb-sucking, nail-biting, and masturbation, which most paediatricians regard as relatively unimportant matters compared with the rest.

The illustrations are all well chosen and clear.

There is little doubt that Professor Hutchison has produced a book that will establish itself firmly amongst the several other British paediatric textbooks, but one cannot help regretting that he did not undertake the much needed full work of reference.


As the present fashion, this book is based on a symposium on modern trends and practice of chemotherapy in childhood. Organized by the editors, who are senior members of the medical staffs in the paediatric departments of the Universities of Tübingen and Münster, it was held at Reutlingen in South West Germany. In addition to contributions by 22 participants the book also includes relevant observations made during discussion. Skilful editing has been these means stressed controversial aspects and allowed differences of opinion to become evident where dogmatic statements might have incurred lively criticism.

No doubt dictated partly by the individual experience of the contributors and their special fields of interest, the topics in this treatise range somewhat haphazardly over more general subjects in the nature of the 'basis of antibiotic treatment'—antibiotics, steroids, γ-globulins; synergism and antagonism in infectious diseases; and 'The effect of chemotherapy on micro-organisms' to the more detailed exposition of the treatment of infections caused by specific organisms such as streptococcal diseases, tuberculosis, pertussis, listeriosis, toxoplasmosis, leptospiroses, and mycoses. Some contributors approached the main theme from a different angle by discussing the infections of particular organ systems. Thus the therapy of respiratory disorders, throat, nose, and ear infections, and diseases of the urinary and alimentary tracts are dealt with according to the organ system involved. Other authors preferred to expand their views on selected disease entities of varying aetiology such as purulent meningitis, osteomyelitis, septicæmia, and bacterial endocarditis. We were astonished to find that in the management of meningococcal meningitis Friedericík recommends penicillin as the only drug to be given in maximal doses, i.e. 1 mega unit per kg. body weight per day to infants and 500,000 units/kg. body weight per day to older children and disregards completely the sulphonamides, a view that is not generally shared in this country. However, his results seemed to be very
BOOK REVIEWS


Four editions within 12 years is probably the best index of the value and popularity of any medical textbook. But if it deals with such a relatively limited subject as the symptomatology and treatment of poisonings it is indeed a sign of widespread recognition. In addition to the fourth German edition, translations of this manual have appeared in Italian, Polish, Spanish, and now also in English.

The special sections are preceded by a general discussion on incidence, distribution and principles of treatment of poisonings with a useful chapter on the most important antidotes which should be available in every hospital. The detailed account of poisonings due to inorganic and organic substances is followed by the toxicology of important drugs such as sedatives, antipyretics, hypnotics, tranquillizers, anticonvulsants, vitamins, hormones, antibiotics etc. Particular attention has been paid to some substances that have become ubiquitous in our modern society, such as insecticides and plastics. Included in the book also is a chapter on poison gases prepared during World War II and other chemicals for mass extermination. The author acknowledges there his indebtedness to a number of informants who preferred to remain anonymous.

Very helpful are the instructions on treatment of the common complications of poisonings, particularly of shock and disturbances of water and electrolyte metabolism.

A tabulation of guiding symptoms at the end of the book should facilitate greatly a correct diagnosis, which may be extremely difficult in the absence of any history or in the unconscious patient, where the nature of the poison is unknown.

Since the author is a physician in charge of a large medical unit his experience is based mainly on observation of the industrial and suicidal poisonings while the paediatrician is faced mainly with accidental poisoning.

However, the author has not neglected the aspects of poisoning in childhood, and the paediatrician will find relevant, though somewhat summary, up-to-date information. Interestingly, calomel disease is not regarded as identical with acrodynia but only as a part of the syndrome. A strong plea is made to remove calomel from the national pharmcopeias.

Printing, paper, reproduction of photographs, and diagrams are of excellent quality and a credit to the publishers.

This book is an essential requisition for all concerned with the treatment of poisonings.


In July 1963, CIBA of Basle sponsored an international symposium at Aix-en-Provence on the subject of iron metabolism. Fifty-eight workers whose interest in this field is well known were invited to attend. The papers given and the discussion arising from these papers are now published in this volume. The book is divided into sections dealing with biochemistry, physiology, iron deficiency and overload, and finally therapeutics. Each section contains approximately 6 chapters followed by relevant discussion. The book is not intended as, and does not fulfil the requirements of, a textbook. Some of the contributions include a review of the literature, but in most cases the main part of the contribution is a review of the author's own work. The book therefore presents a very good cross-section of the research, both basic and applied, in iron metabolism.

The book is well illustrated; most of the illustrations have been taken from lantern slides, and in certain cases these do not fit neatly into the published text. However, this aesthetic loss is more than compensated for by the speed with which the editor has produced the book.

Naturally the standard of contribution and the style of composition vary from one chapter to another. One variation, however, that can be criticized on editorial grounds is the quotation of references. In some chapters these are designated by numbers only, in others by the leading author, and in others still by both author and number. However, invariably at the end of each chapter the references are given in a continuous form, using abbreviations for journals which are not always those internationally accepted. The index appears perfectly adequate.

This book will provide little help to anyone whose main interest is the therapeutic aspects of iron. However, it