collection of cases and meticulously careful observations. His colleague, Barbara Ockenden, prepared his draft for publication. The huge total of 1,168 neoplasms verified at Great Ormond Street Hospital in the last 37 years are classified and reviewed.

Steroid treatment in asthma, which tends to be abused and must be supervised with great care, is discussed by Norman; and the technique and value of renal biopsy are reviewed by Black and White who are themselves leading authorities on the subject. Finally, Macnab, in the two concluding chapters, has reviewed the striking advances which have been achieved in the past few years in the understanding and management of hydrocephalus and spina bifida cystica in infancy.


This Swiss paper-back presents a brief and uneven review of liver disease in childhood. Six chapters are in German and one in French. Vest’s account of bilirubin metabolism is lucid but becomes less so when dealing with the (admittedly confusing) eponymous and often familial types of jaundice. Much the same ground is covered by the French contributor who does, however, give some idea of the relative frequency of liver disease, particularly in early childhood. Even so, the rarer and rarest types of jaundice remain a jumble.

By far the best contribution is Richterich’s chapter on liver cell physiology and the physiological basis, specificity, significance, and limitations of liver function tests. The account of needle biopsy scarcely does justice to a most valuable procedure.

Mangold’s comprehensive but haphazard list of childhood cirrhosis may be a boon to examination candidates who possess a photographic memory. The chapter on serum hepatitis is satisfactorily adequate. The final contribution, in railway-timetable style, on the definition, aetiology, and treatment of hepatic coma appears to have been an editorial afterthought.

The bibliography of one of the chapters is arranged neither numerically nor alphabetically—most infuriating. Another chapter has no bibliography at all. The booklet is well printed but badly bound, and has no index.


Dr. Hilson’s book is unusual. From its title it is evidently intended as a practical guide rather than an academic text, and on the cover it is stated that ‘it should be particularly valuable as a practical aid to the graduate in the paediatric ward, and to the family practitioner in his day-to-day work’. To this end it is written in the style of a tutorial, with direct instructions and many tabulated lists. The aims of the book are high, but perhaps Dr. Hilson has underestimated the difficulties of attaining them. It is one thing to talk to a small group of students on selected topics, but another matter to record this in cold print and at the same time to extend the topics to cover virtually the whole field of paediatrics. It is doubtful if our greatest teachers—men like Robert Hutchison—would have succeeded, but then they would not have tried. The loose phrase which may pass unnoticed in extempore speech is laid bare to cold analysis; the ambiguity which can be corrected by simple question and answer at the end of a seminar remains unresolved. Unfortunately the book abounds in careless phrases, and one fears that careless writing points to muddled thinking. What can one make of a paragraph such as this?—

‘Give Thyroid extract B.P. commencing with 15 mgs. or grs. 1/4, or use thyroxine sodium 0-025 mgs. daily gradually increasing the dosage to just short of toxicity. This produces diarrhoea, irritability, loss of weight and tachycardia in infancy, and in addition in older children, palpitations, sweating and fainting. This must be continued for life.’

To detail the many faults would be too great a task for a short review. In view of the immense amount of work that has gone into the preparation of this book, I feel deeply sorry to have to say that because of its inaccuracies and because of the bad example of its thought and writing I should not like it to be read by any of my students.


This volume comprises the Scientific proceedings of the first All-Asian Congress of Pediatrics held in New Delhi in 1961. It contains contributions under the following headings: nutrition; the gastro-intestinal system; infectious diseases; the respiratory system; the cardiovascular system; the haemopoietic system; the genito-urinary system; the skin; the nervous system; social pediatrics; growth and development; and miscellaneous. There are 140 contributors.


In the author’s opinion empiricism is still superior to theory in the day-to-day practice of psychiatry. Many a psychiatrist observing his internist colleagues may think that this applies fairly widely in their domain too. Dr. Holmes succeeds remarkably well in presenting clinical material and technical subtleties (inevitably difficult for the non-psychiatrist) lucidly and in well-disciplined language. Indeed, what he has to say should be of real