of references, many dating from 1964 and a few from 1965.

To what extent has the incidence of rheumatic fever and its mortality fallen in the past 40 years? What is the incidence of carditis in first attacks? What are the facts relating to ASO titres in normal children and in children with rheumatic fever? What conclusions can be drawn from the extensive and conflicting evidence concerning treatment with steroids and salicylates and their effect on the development of chronic heart disease? What is the evidence on which prophylaxis against recurrences should be based? The answers to these questions are only a taste of the feast of information in this excellent monograph. There are two chapters on chronic rheumatic heart disease and public health aspects, which are less informative than the rest, and the appendix on bacteriological methods is obviously included for the American office paediatricians.

The House of Saunders has added yet another to its family of elegant and successful paediatric publications. Major Problems in Clinical Paediatrics will surely join Nelson, Nadas and Pediatric Clinics on the paediatrician’s bookshelf.


Dr. Venables has written this small book primarily for undergraduate students, general practitioners, and paediatricians with the aim of increasing their interest and understanding of a subject of considerable importance and great topical interest. The book is well planned, starting with a chapter headed Basic General Considerations which provides concise sections on relevant basic anatomy and physiology. In these sections, and elsewhere in the book, there is a refreshing absence of the specialist jargon which is apt to make the specialized textbook almost unintelligible to the general clinician. There follows a chapter on normal and abnormal cardiovascular development with a note on the incidence and aetiology of developmental anomalies, a classification of anomalies, and the mode of presentation of congenital heart disease.

Three subjects—cyanosis of the newborn, cardiac failure, cardiac murmurs and their significance—are each given a chapter to themselves, because they represent the three important modes of presentation of heart disease in children.

Most of the remaining 100 pages is devoted to describing the clinical features of all the important cardiac defects and diseases and discussing their management. The relative unimportance at the present time of acquired heart disease in children is shown by the fact that this subject occupies only 12 pages compared with the 64 pages on developmental anomalies.

There is a short chapter giving some of the indications for special cardiac investigations, with the briefest possible description of the techniques involved. A chapter on the essentials of electrocardiography follows after the interposition of two chapters on acquired heart disease. Surgical treatment is not given a chapter to itself but is considered briefly under the relevant sections. Lastly, there is an appendix containing the text of a booklet which is distributed to parents of children attending the Cardiac Investigatory Clinic in the Royal Children’s Hospital, Melbourne (an idea that could well be copied in other centres).

The format is excellent and the book is compact, though just a little too big for the average pocket. The few illustrations are well chosen and nicely reproduced. For a first edition there are relatively few typographical errors, but the page headings become a little confused towards the end of the book.

Making allowance for the limited purpose of the book, there is very little to criticise. On page 46 there is no mention of gastro-intestinal disturbances, especially vomiting, as early signs of digitalis toxicity: in young infants bilious vomiting may lead to suspicion of intestinal obstruction. The dogmatic statement on page 52 that, ‘diastolic flow murmurs indicate left-to-right shunt if there is no evidence of stenosis of the mitral or tricuspid valve’ ignores the numerous other occasions when such murmurs can be heard, such as in some cases of uncomplicated coarctation of the aorta, aortic stenosis, haemoglobinopathies, etc. In the section on ‘Murmurs in the Newborn’ (page 53) it would have been better to stress the fact that the appearance of murmurs due to ventricular septal defect or patent ductus arteriosus may be delayed for two or three weeks, until the fall in pulmonary vascular resistance is sufficient to allow a significant left-to-right shunt, thus explaining why such lesions are likely to be missed during the routine examination of the baby in the maternity wards. A symptom which, because of its diagnostic value, should have received greater emphasis is the laboured breathing, with intercostal recession, xiphisternal retraction, and indrawing, characteristic of babies with anomalies producing large systemic pulmonary shunts and which is thought to be due to the reduced compliance of their over-vascularized lungs. In the acyanotic infant this is most likely to indicate either a ventricular septal defect or patent ductus arteriosus, while in the presence of cyanosis it suggests the possibility of transposition of the great arteries.

Such criticisms apart, this is a very praiseworthy attempt to produce a small, readable, and useful book on paediatric cardiology, which will surely fulfil the purpose for which it was intended. It is certain to be a popular book, and deservedly so.


Those who are already familiar with the booklet ‘Diets for Sick Children’ (third edition 1958) will welcome this new and completely revised handbook of diets for sick children.

A new section has been included which deals with the normal food requirements of children of different
age-groups. This is a useful addition for those who are concerned with feeding the healthy child. It also provides a basis for the construction of all therapeutic diets.

The usual therapeutic diets are adequately covered. A brief summary of the principles on which the diet is based precedes the description and arrangement of each special diet.

The diabetic diet, using 10 g. portions of carbohydrate foods and unlimited protein and fat foods, is clearly laid out. The alternative food list and the list of recipes, which can also be used for the family, will help to give variety to the diet. One recipe 'Queen of Puddings' states that two-thirds of the pudding contains 20 g. of carbohydrate, this is a mistake, one-third of the recipe will provide 20 g. carbohydrate.

The gluten-free diet which is used in the treatment of coeliac disease is fully explained. The list of manufactured products which are gluten free will be a help to the person who is responsible for making this diet more interesting to the child; unfortunately, there is an error in the list of chocolates and sweets that are forbidden.

The dietary treatment of the inborn errors of metabolism, e.g. galactosaemia and phenylketonuria, is well described. The lists of foods and proprietary products that can be used in these conditions will prove most helpful.

The author writes that the object of the book is to give practical assistance to paediatricians, general practitioners, health visitors, dietitians, and nurses. She has undoubtedly achieved what she set out to do.


This monograph is the latest in a series of Paediatric Surgical Monographs edited by Mark M. Ravitch. The author describes the results of a personal review of 306 patients with spina bifida cystica, seen and treated at the Royal Children's Hospital, Melbourne, Australia. The patients were from the 20-year period, 1943-1963, during which the surgical management has changed due to the development of the Holter valve in 1959 for the treatment of the associated hydrocephalus. There are chapters dealing with the aetiology, pathology, embryology, and pathogenesis, clinical features, and natural history, early and late management, and the results of spina bifida cystica.

Two chapters deserve special mention. That on pathology based on operative and necropsy findings and detailed dissections of the spinal cord has resulted in a suitable classification of the many types of defect found in clinical practice; in addition the author demonstrates the high incidence of myelodysplasia and hydromyelia found in association with myelomeningoceles, which adversely affects the prognosis.

The chapter on the management of the urinary tract is lengthy, amounting to 30% of the monograph; however, this section is interesting to read, as the author correlates the results of cystometry with the other routine investigations. The various forms of permanent urinary diversion are discussed, but no mention is made of colo-cutaneous ureterostomy.

As many different specialities are involved in the care of these infants and children with spinal myelomeningoceles, it is difficult for a single author to write well on all aspects, but the author does stress the need for a co-ordinated plan resulting in the total rehabilitation of the whole child.

There is an exhaustive bibliography and the illustrations are clear, except the colour ones on page 23, which are of poor quality and serve no useful purpose.

This monograph can be recommended to paediatricians and surgeons who have a special interest in the care of these unfortunate infants and children.


This book gives us exactly what the title promises, but it is a generous contribution and the span of 'development' and of 'neuro-psychiatry' is very wide indeed. Few physicians graduate from academic neurology into psycho-analysis, but Schilder did so as well as Freud. We must be grateful to his widow for her meticulous work in gathering the mass of clinical material together. Here and there the interest is heightened by her ability to add comments to case histories, so that we know both the developmental pattern and the ultimate outcome.

Schilder is concerned with every aspect of development. His views on perception, on language and speech, on motor development, and on their close linkage with emotional maturation and such deviations as aggressiveness, hyperkinesis, and obsessionality, all stimulate fascinating speculations in the realm of body-mind linkage.

How does a damaged brain, or rather the child who has one, think, feel, manage his body, develop his image? Sometimes the author is provocatively dogmatic, but while accepting the major principles of Freudian ideology, and acknowledging a debt to Melanie Klein's work, he remains a highly original and stimulating thinker. At no point may the clinician evade his responsibility towards the dual basis of the clinical condition for which his advice is sought. An unsettling book and all the better for it.


This book, No. 18 of the Clinics in Developmental