receives only little attention even in the major textbooks of medicine. Dr. Schwarz who, during a period of 3 years, had the opportunity of studying 13 cases of this group of disorders at the Department of Endocrinology of the Medical Polyclinic of the University of Heidelberg, proposes a unitarian aetiology for the two diseases. His hypothesis is that a hereditary defect in phosphate transport mechanism accounts for the pathogenesis of both diseases which he regards as variants of the same basic disturbance. His view is supported by a number of facts of which the most important is occurrence of pseudohypoparathyroidism as well as pseudo- pseudohypoparathyroidism, not only among members of the same family but even in the same sibship. 

Somewhat disappointing for the paediatrician is the scanty reference to the childhood manifestations of the diseases, though 57 of the 97 patients with pseudohypoparathyroidism were under 17 years of age. The youngest patient in the literature was an 18-month-old child. It is suggested that the predominance of this condition with its hypercalcaemia and hyperphosphataemia in the younger agegroups is largely due to the much more active mineral metabolism associated with skeletal growth, while pseudo-pseudohypoparathyroidism is more likely to be encountered in adults. Another aspect that is largely ignored is the oligophrenia which occurs in 65% of the cases. It seems that in spite of their mental retardation these patients are able to earn their own living when they reach maturity. No opinion is expressed on the relation of the mental backwardness to the postulated metabolic defect.

Anybody interested in pseudo- and pseudo-pseudohypoparathyroidism will find here all the information he may require in a pleasantly readable form, supported by excellent illustrations and 15 pages of references.


Eminent specialists who have contributed to the knowledge of the orthopaedic, genetic, biochemical, respiratory, and cardiac aspects of scoliosis discuss their problems and thereby present a more rounded view of this difficult subject. The four common aetiologies of scoliosis are given as congenital, idiopathic, paralytic, and secondary to neurofibromatosis. These factors overlap and considerable disagreement was soon found even on the definition of congenital (which I take to mean—present at birth).

The reader will have guidance, when presented with a 2-month-old baby lying in a curved spinal position, in distinguishing whether this is a simple postural curve, an ‘idiopathic’ congenital curve, or a curve with marked structural deformity. The idiopathic group is divided into infantile, juvenile, and adolescent, with varying sex incidence, curve direction, and prognosis.

Diseases of known genetic basis in which scoliosis may be a factor are clearly reviewed and classified on the basis of their mode of inheritance. Indications for conservative and surgical treatment are covered in a few pages, and the physician is not swamped with operation detail. The physician, indeed, will find much of interest in the articles on the pulmonary aspects of scoliosis, assessment of cardio-respiratory function, regional blood flow, lung vascularity, and diaphragmatic movements.

Progress of the lesion and the effects of treatment are assessed by the surgeons in terms of structural deformity and the cosmetic result, while the physicians use cardio-respiratory function as their guide.

Advances in the separation of various subgroups may be achieved by biochemical and chromosomal investigations.

In this small and easily read volume of 96 pages is a wealth of interest to all who are faced with the problem of scoliosis.


This monograph gives an up-to-date and detailed account of genetic testicular disorders. There is a full clinical account with emphasis on the anthropometric aspects of the syndrome, and a well-illustrated description of the testicular pathology. The genetic basis of the condition is discussed in great detail, recording the varieties of chromosomal abnormalities and the theories put forward to explain their origin.

The bibliography is extensive, with references to 649 papers, and covers the world literature very fairly. The text is somewhat discursive, but gathers together a great deal of information. This is a valuable compilation of current knowledge on the subject and will be of use to all clinical endocrinologists, and to those who are interested in the development of the boy into manhood.


This is a further tome of the standard work on Paediatrics in German edited by H. Opitz and F. Schmid, the ‘Handbuch der Kinderheilkunde’. Its aim is again, as in preceding sections, to provide an up-to-date text and a reliable reference book which will keep its place in the German paediatric literature in years to come. 59 contributors have been entrusted with this task of whom all but 10 are German. 4 of the foreign authors are Hungarian, 2 Austrian, 3 Swiss, and 1 Swedish.

The plan of this volume is well thought out and