description of bone pathology is primarily from the clinical point of view, without neglecting the radiological aspect. The numerous and excellent x-rays, illustrations, and tables make this a valuable addition to any paediatric and radiological library, as a reference book for paediatricians and radiologists and for examination candidates, even if their knowledge of German is imperfect.

Professor Swoboda’s concise descriptions under precise well set-out headings, including pathology, clinical signs, radiological findings, the progress of a disease, the differential diagnosis, and in some instances the therapy, clarify each pathological entity, though some shortening of the legends to the various illustrations might be beneficial for those readers who are not fully conversant with the German language.

The importance of gonadic shielding from radiation in infants is shown in one illustration, but does not seem to be borne out by the majority of illustrations of the pelvis in the rest of the book where there is no evidence of gonadic shields.

The monograph neglects the problems of variations of normality in health and disease, and as this is frequently a cause for the clinician or radiologist to consult a book of reference, one might regret that not more of the book is devoted to the important problem of the borderline between normal and pathological changes.

The bibliography is extensive and mentions many important references in the European and American literature.

The critical suggestions do not diminish the value of this book for, as Dr. Johnson said: ‘Knowledge is of two kinds. We know a subject ourselves, or we know where we can find information upon it.’


This work represents a successful attempt to collect, review, and clarify material in an extremely complex field. The book deals with the correlation between thymic structure and function, and various clinical and experimental syndromes, in a coherent and explicit manner.

There are chapters on the development, function, and size of the normal gland with a skilfully compressed review of experimental work. The relationships between the thymus and immune deficiency states, myasthenia gravis, systemic illnesses related to thymoma, etc., are then considered. Each chapter is concluded by a valuable synopsis, and there are two useful appendices representing a bibliography of thymic tumour associated with marrow hypoplasia and immunoglobulin deficiency, respectively.

A notable feature of the writing is the readiness of the authors to consider the reasons for discrepancies between the findings of different workers; this is well exemplified by the section on the presence of germinal centres in the thymus.

The short note on lymphocytic choriomeningitis probably underestimates the significance of this disease in immunological thought. The only other criticism is inevitable—that parts of the book require modification in view of work done since 1968. This does not detract from its value as an excellent introduction to a subject with a vast and growing bibliography.

The photomicrographs and electron-photomicrographs are of excellent quality throughout.