The main value of this book therefore is that it provides a summary of international current practice in a variety of perinatal subjects. In addition British investigators will find the extensive references to much of the European work in these fields particularly useful.


Paediatric and allergy books usually devote one chapter to allergic problems in childhood. The foreword states that the world swarms with allergic children, so it is not surprising that a book was required to review and summarize the present knowledge of the diagnosis, investigation, and treatment of allergy in children. In 26 chapters and over 550 pages, it can be said that the subject has been very well covered. The authors do not necessarily agree with each other so we are given both authors’ opinions, and this allows the critical reader to agree first with one author and then with the other.

The book will be useful as a reference book both for the allergist and the paediatrician. Common problems are dealt with in some detail, but there are chapters on ocular, otologic, and genito-urinary allergy. The dogmatism of some authors is absent so we read that bacterial allergy probably plays a role, but it is difficult to prove. Also that in serous otitis media only in a small percentage could the skin test findings be correlated with the clinical symptoms. We read that nasal polyposis is extremely rare in children and though infection and allergy may be involved, cystic fibrosis plays the major role in most children.

The book has been written specifically for the U.S.A. as far as seasonal inhalant allergens are concerned and it is only for this reason that it cannot be unreservedly recommended to all interested in paediatric allergy.

S.S.I.E.M. Symposium No. 7. Errors of Phenylalanine Thyroxine and Testosterone Metabolism


This is the Proceedings of the Seventh Annual Symposium of the Society of the Study of Inborn Errors of Metabolism held in July 1969, and consists of 13 brief clear papers concerned with the metabolism of phenylalanine, thyroxine, and testosterone. There is a need for this type of small volume where authoritative statements are presented in such a way that they are valuable not only to the research worker but more particularly to the general paediatrician or adult physician who wishes to keep up to date in the field.

The philosophy of screening and the problems which arise therefrom are wisely discussed, including the difficult problem of the diagnosis of phenylketonuria and the significance of hyperphenylalaninaemia. There are some useful miscellaneous papers on various biochemical aspects of mental retardation. Particularly good clear accounts of thyroid disorders in children are included. Studies on fetal and cryptorchid testes are described and it is suggested that there may be a deficiency of 3β-hydroxysteroid dehydrogenase in the latter. A paper on testicular function in lower vertebrates is an unexpected contribution to a book such as this, but it raises many interesting points.

This book can be highly recommended. There is a definite need for this type of book in addition to the large textbook on inborn errors.