Book Reviews

entitled 'Immunologic Deficiency States', was reviewed by Dr. Robert A. Good and it is predictably lucid, authoritative, and up to date. A very useful appendix classifies the clinical and laboratory findings in 11 distinct syndromes of primary immunological deficiency. Other chapters discuss paediatric gynaecology, pharmacology, and surgery. The survey of paediatric gynaecological disorders ranges from the problems of neonates to those of adolescents, and is written for the practising American paediatrician. It gives a useful introduction to the diagnosis and management of intersex, but is not sufficiently detailed to be used as a reference text. Other disorders, such as amenorrhoea in adolescents, would be more likely to find their way to a gynaecologist on this side of the Atlantic.

The pharmacology section is particularly concerned with perinatal effects of drugs and gives useful information of placental transfer as well as an appendix detailing the serum half-life of various antibiotics in premature and term newborn infants.

There is a good review of recent advances in paediatric surgery, which includes a brief account of some neonatal emergencies. A chapter devoted to sex education takes a commonsense attitude but is probably more appropriate for British general practitioners and school medical officers than for paediatricians.

The 60-page Miscellany starts with a section on emergencies which again is of limited application outside America. The remainder of this chapter discusses, inter alia, the discovery of the Epstein-Barr virus and its relation to infectious mononucleosis and Burkitt's lymphoma, the value of phototherapy in neonatal jaundice, the hazards of excessive noise, and the antenatal detection of genetic defects.

Standards of production and particularly the photographic illustrations are surprisingly poor when one considers the lavishness of much of the direct promotional material emanating from drug manufacturers. At £4, the book does not stand comparison with, for example, the Pediatric Clinics of North America or the Year Book of Pediatrics. Apart from the splendid immunology article, its main value is as a bedside book for occasional sampling.


A good case can be made for a book on disorders of adolescence. It would be of particular interest to paediatricians because they are concerned with growth and development and these are having their last fling in adolescence. Such a book should, however, focus on all parameters and their important peculiarities in this age period. Dr. Daniel's book can hardly claim to do this.

It is divided into four sections: the essence of adolescence; problems of the adolescent patient; communication and rehabilitation; and the parents of the adolescent. The book is avowedly limited in its social scope, but in the third, mainly clinical section, it is particularly deficient both in what is included and what is omitted.

Why, in a book on adolescence, is so much space given to genetic disorders or to skin disorders, which are by no means predominant in adolescence? According to the index, nervous disorders appear on pp. 143–153, but on these pages is found a chapter on headache and convulsive disorders. And when one looks for nervous psychosomatic and adaptive disturbances, which are so important in adolescence, one finds disappointingly little on them. I can find no discussion of anorexia nervosa, appetite aberrations, or sleep disturbances. Amid some rather turgid generalizations and many irrelevances some pearls can be found, like 'the desire for loudness'. The task of attempting to draw attention to this difficult and neglected cross-section of medicine is praiseworthy, but adolescence deserves a more comprehensive approach than can be found here.


This book deals with the effects of manipulation of the developing animal during 'critical periods'. The use of this term is not confined to the embryological concept, as evolved by Stockard, but is extended to include different critical events in different fields, e.g. weaning and social development, puberty and growth, etc. Many different parameters are studied, socialization of wolves, hypertensive response to salt and nephrectomy in rats of different ages, LDH response to stress, effects of sex hormones at birth on subsequent growth, the effects of irradiation of the ovary in early life on ultimate reproductive ability, adaptation to calorific loss, and systems of growth study by bone age. The papers are generally of high standard and a useful discussion is printed after most, unfortunately not all, of them. The paper by Rakusan and Poupa, dealing with morphologically defined critical periods of the cardiac response to aortic constriction is of particular value since other publications by these authors are not readily available to those reading English. Only one paper, by Grollman, deals with the effects of prenatal influences on the expression of phenotypic defects, a point emphasized by McCance in the general discussion following all the papers.

The value of conference proceedings published 3 years after the meeting is doubtful. In only two papers has some attempt been made to update the bibliography beyond 1967. This, together with its high price, will severely limit the value of the volume to most individuals.


The third International Conference on Congenital Malformations was held in the Hague in September