Book Reviews


This is a comprehensive contribution to a rapidly expanding field of surgery. The whole field of orthopaedic surgery of childhood, together with fractures and joint injuries has been covered by the one author in just over 1,000 pages. It is an accomplishment of considerable magnitude.

The first two chapters offer a general introduction to the subject, with discussion of diagnostic methods and the rationale underlying the various forms of management, such as splintage, physical therapy, and surgery. There are interesting sections on growth and development of the musculoskeletal system, and consideration of the increasingly important genetic factors about which the orthopaedic surgeon is often somewhat lacking in knowledge. The major part of the book deals with disease of the musculoskeletal system in childhood, in a discursive and reasoned manner based on the author's wide experience, and also drawing to a considerable extent from the literature. The last two chapters deal with fractures and joint injuries on an anatomical basis.

The reviewer could find no obvious omissions in the text and though some of the opinions expressed could not be regarded as universally accepted, there is always a reasoned argument and a good bibliography at the end of each chapter.

The book is beautifully produced and clearly set out, with a very high standard of illustration of clinical photographs, radiographs, and line drawings. There are one or two errors in the illustrations, such as in those depicting the operations for recurrent dislocation of the patella, and also one or two plates in which the radiographs are presented upside down. These comments are not intended as criticisms of a superbly presented work, but in the hope that they will be ironed out in future editions.

This is an expensive volume which, though well worth the outlay, is hardly likely to be bought by surgeons in training. It will be a most valuable reference work, and should be accessible to orthopaedic surgeons at all stages in their careers.


This slim volume is the official account of the third symposium held at the Institute of Diseases of the Chest in November 1970, to discuss some aspects of the complex problems of scoliosis, with particular reference to the skeletal and respiratory problems involved.

Since it has long been known that the deterioration in spinal curvature occurs at a rate directly proportional to the speed of growth of the vertebral column, a day was spent by a distinguished international group of specialists in the fields of scoliosis and growth discussing what is known and what might be learned of the relation between these subjects. Nineteen separate papers were read and the proceedings were then summarized by Professor Burwell who makes a valiant effort to direct attention to fruitful paths for further research which might help to solve the baffling problem of aetiology of this group of conditions.

The individual papers vary widely in length and depth of content, but those in normal growth in children by Professor Tanner, and on lung growth by Professor Reid, will be of particular interest to paediatricians. It may be that the section on the biochemical growth by Dr. R. Smith will prove, ultimately, to be of more relevance in unravelling the mysteries of this condition.

The standard of printing and reproduction on radiographs is high. This volume will prove a useful addition to paediatric and orthopaedic libraries, as the information on growth collected here will have relevance to many conditions in addition to scoliosis.


This book has been written by a specialist paediatric surgeon and a former sister of a children's ward to give those nurses who are concerned with the care of infants who are subjected to major surgical operations an idea both of what is being treated and of how such babies are nursed before and after operation.

Though there is much in it that is both good and helpful and in spite of its superficial attraction to nurses concerned with the care of the newborn who need emergency surgical treatment, it is difficult to recommend this book without some reservation.

Brief descriptions are given of most of the operations which are done at present on infants, but the balance is sometimes inequitable, for example a page and a photograph are given to ectopic bladder and only 17 lines and a sketch to hypospadias. There are many illustrations but some have been repeated in black and white as well as in colour. The different colour values of the colour plates is confusing and the point at which they are placed in the text is sometimes inappropriate.

The price of this book will put it out of the financial reach of many nurses who might otherwise buy and use it, and this is a pity because if duplication of illustrations were avoided and some of the poorer ones omitted, the next edition could be cheaper, and many more of those nurses for whom it is intended and to whom it might be useful might be induced to buy it.