

Book Reviews

Sudden and Unexpected Deaths in Infancy (Cot Deaths). Edited by FRANCIS E. CAMPS and R. G. CARPENTER. (Pp. 128; 24 illustrations + 14 tables. £2.00.) Bristol: John Wright. 1972.

This is a report of the Proceedings of the Sir Samuel Bedson Symposium held in Cambridge in April 1970. The 30 participants included 7 paediatricians. In the 2-day meeting it was possible to review most of the medical knowledge of sudden infant death and to collate the various theories concerning the cause and mode of death. The 14 papers consider the epidemiology of these deaths: milk hypersensitivity, immunology, respiratory virology, respiratory reflexes, airway obstruction, and inborn errors of metabolism. Appendices deal with nasal obstruction as a cause of death, a technique for examining the nose of the infant at necropsy and early indicators such as respiratory distress in the neonatal period and low tactile-adaptive scores; the fourth appendix is a helpful article prepared by J. L. Emery for bereaved parents. The book is well illustrated and has a useful bibliography.

At necropsy this is 'a syndrome of nothingness, by and large' and the participants were aware that they were possibly dealing with several different conditions, or a condition in which a single mode of death may be sparked off by different causes, or a condition consisting of multiple factors working in various combinations, some of which may prove fatal. Among the important points to emerge was the need to define the condition and to have a standard description on death certificates. One valuable outcome of the symposium was the establishment of a foundation to support and co-ordinate research, to collect and administer funds, to be a centre for information, to promote aftercare of the families, and to communicate and exchange information with other countries.

The results of several investigations may be of importance to infant care even if they do not ultimately prove to be a major cause of sudden infant death, and there is a great deal in this book to interest paediatricians, pathologists, epidemiologists, and other medical scientists. The wide-ranging discussion is reported in full and provides several pointers for future research.

Hematologic Problems in the Newborn. 2nd Edition. Vol. IV in Major Problems in Clinical Pediatrics. By FRANK A. OSKI and J. LAURENCE NALMAN. (Pp. xiv + 400; illustrated + tables. £5.35.) Philadelphia and London: W. B. Saunders. 1972.

The first edition of this book appeared in 1966, and advances in a number of aspects of this subject have meant that a great deal of this book is new. Coagulation

defects including disseminated intravascular coagulation, fetal blood transfusion, and the prevention of rhesus disease by giving anti-D to the mother, are some of the subjects which have burgeoned in the 6 years since the last edition.

As a compendium of facts and a source of references to the literature, this book could be useful. It might have been even more useful if the authors had been able to temper the facts by giving us more of their personal experience. A surprising and regrettable omission is any reference whatever to the premature baby and anaemia.

Herpes Simplex Varicella and Zoster. Clinical Manifestations and Treatment. By B. E. JUEL-JENSEN and F. O. MACCALLUM. (Pp. xi + 194; illustrated + tables. £3.50.) London: Heinemann. 1972.

The curious relation existing between varicella and zoster, and the puzzling phenomenon of the common recurring herpes simplex have always been intriguing matters, but it is the fact that chemotherapeutic agents are now available which are active against these viruses, with the consequent crucial need for early diagnosis of a disease such as herpetic encephalitis, that makes this monograph so timely. It is written for clinicians by a clinician and a virologist, both of whom have contributed much to recent knowledge of the subject and especially to therapeutic aspects. They have here made available an immense amount of valuable first-hand experience. The authors are highly cautious in evaluating the effectiveness of chemotherapy in herpetic encephalitis, but lean to preferring one of the cytidine analogues (cytosine or adenosine arabinoside) to idoxuridine.

The illustrations of the numerous clinical manifestations of zoster and varicella are excellent. Unquestionably a most valuable book for the clinician.

Human Growth Hormone. Edited by A. STUART MASON. (Pp. v + 201; illustrated + tables. £3.75.) London: Heinemann. 1972.

One's first reaction to this small slim volume is to wonder at the economics of the book trade: £3.75 for 201 small pages. This is quickly replaced by puzzlement at why yet another review volume should appear which deals with topics already generously covered in the literature. Putting these criticisms temporarily to one side, there is much in the book which is commendable. It consists of 6 chapters each written