references in exchange for 2 others. One is the Denver Developmental Screening test which, whatever criticisms one may make of the methods of data collection, gives centile ranks for each item tested, and vividly shows on the recording chart the range of normal variation. The other is the study by G. Neligan and D. Prudham (Developmental Medicine and Child Neurology, 1969, 11, 413) which gives centiles for 4 developmental milestones—sitting unsupported, walking, single words, and sentences—in Newcastle children.

The second thought is whether the book might be even better if some of the parts relating to the abnormal were cut out. Its essence is in the chapters on normal development, developmental assessment, and its interpretation. These are based on the author’s experience and are outstandingly good. Some of the chapters on pathological conditions affecting development now seem less appropriate than in the earlier editions, because the literature has become so extensive that even someone of the author’s breadth of knowledge cannot cover it all. Thus the statement on page 48 that there has not yet been a satisfactory investigation of the relation between neonatal convulsions and subsequent development must be galling to A. L. Rose and C. T. Lombroso (Pediatrics, 1970, 45, 404) who have studied this subject so thoroughly and so clearly. Furthermore, to include everything relevant would completely unbalance the book. Thus the chapter on mental subnormality and physical disease cannot possibly include all such associations—as the author recognizes—and parts are so brief as to be misleading. For example, it is not clear (page 318) that Komrower and Lee’s findings in galactosomia referred to treated cases.

These criticisms in no way detract from the merits of this work, for which paediatrics owes Professor Illingworth a great debt.


There has been a very considerable increase of interest in bronchial asthma in recent years and Dr. Kjell Aas and his colleagues have made many contributions in the immunology of this disease. His book provides a useful guide to his own work and that of others in the field. There are 187 pages of text and no less than 42 pages of references in this monograph which make it an excellent starting point for anyone wishing to know the basic facts about the subject or wishing to read further into the literature.

The major part of the book is concerned with the various types of immune mechanisms, and especially with the central role of IgE in allergic asthma. There is a description of the nature of many of the common antigens involved in human allergy and the effects of hyposensitization. The actions of chemical transmitters which affect the bronchi are discussed. The book also reviews a number of other topics related to asthma such as more basic pulmonary anatomy and physiology, theories of pathogenesis of asthma, the current theories of autonomic control, and the role of infection, exercise, and emotion.

The book is certainly quite readable but tends to be rather patchy. The immunological aspects of the disease are generally well covered but recent advances in understanding the role of the lymphocytes, thymus, and bone marrow receive scant attention. The coverage of several of the other topics is also rather superficial and might have been better omitted. The author has made a good attempt to present a fair and unbiased account of the role of immunology and other factors in asthma and has not adhered to the dogmatic ideas of many other writers in this field.


This book deserves high praise. Though the preface states that it is an experiment in education, traditionalists British paediatricians need not be put off. It is a comprehensive textbook of paediatrics for students in a fairly orthodox form. But the emphasis and classification is fully up-to-date and fairly reflects paediatric science and practice in 1972. The emphasis is on the scientific basis of paediatrics and child health, and a large team of authorities in their own subspecialties make their own expert contributions, which are in general clear and will be understood by the modern student, well grounded as he is in cellular biology, statistics, respiratory physiology, and the like. The editors have done their work well. The balance of broad principles and detail, health and disease, organic and psychogenic disorder, individual and community health, is excellent. It is packed with facts—at times too packed if it leads the reader to think that all the laboratory data are necessary for good paediatric practice—and there is a selection of references (mostly American) at the end of each chapter for those whose appetite is still unsatisfied. In a comprehensive text of only 258 pages dogmatism is inevitable and there is surprisingly little with which to disagree. One cannot suppress a chauvinistic twinge of regret that the account of the history of paediatrics contains so little mention of British contributions—and that from an expatriate Englishman.

Although written by Americans for Americans, the reviewer places this among the three or four textbooks of choice for British students during their paediatric clerkships. Though soft-backed, it should withstand rough usage and the price is not high. It should certainly be available in the departmental library of every teaching hospital paediatric unit.


The introductory chapters of this book are concerned with the care of the newborn infant undergoing surgery,