

disparity in the relative amount of space given to problems in comparison with their actual occurrence; for example, only 43 pages are devoted to respiratory disorders, whereas there are 107 pages on neurology.

The chapters on small-for-dates infants, metabolism and its disorders, pharmacology, infections, renal disorders, and practical procedures are good, and there is a comprehensive list of normal values for the constituents of blood, urine, CSF, and faeces which might prove invaluable as these data are often not readily accessible. A short section on the perinatal necropsy could also be useful. The inclusion of a chapter on care in tropical countries is an excellent idea, though one questions whether this large and expensive book is the right place for it. Haematological disorders are well covered, especially disseminated intravascular coagulation, but the author, having sounded a warning note about the possible long-term ill-effects of phototherapy, immediately proceeds to advocate its use in *all* infants whose bilirubin rises above 10 mg/100 ml!

The chapter on respiratory disorders is disappointing and there is a somewhat unfortunate separation between the section dealing with asphyxia and that concerned with immediate respiratory problems, such as hyaline membrane disease. The chapter on gastrointestinal diseases is insufficient; by contrast, the one on neurology seems too long. Photographs and *x*-rays are all together in one section. These are informative as far as they go but more *x*-rays might with advantage have been included. The index is adequate, but more cross-referencing in the text would have been desirable.

This book deserves a place on the shelves of neonatal departments, but the would-be individual purchaser is advised to look at other books on neonatology before buying this one.

**The Child at School.** A Paediatrician's Manual for Teachers. R. S. ILLINGWORTH. (Pp.xii+301. £5.00.) Oxford: Blackwell Scientific Publications. 1974.

Your reviewer is puzzled by this new publication, which seems to be no more than another, expensive version of the author's earlier (80p) book *The Normal School Child—His Problems, Physical and Emotional* (1964). The new book is subtitled 'A Paediatrician's Manual for Teachers', but the content and style is little different. The first three chapters are concerned with pre- and postnatal factors, mainly social and psychological, that affect behaviour; discipline and punishments; and behaviour disorders. It is disconcerting that these precede chapters on physical growth, puberty, and normal development of young children; and that prominence is given in the chapter on behaviour disorders to juvenile delinquency, drugs, and smoking without reference to physical and psychological changes characteristic of puberty and adolescence. There follow chapters summarizing the role of developmental testing in infancy, variations in mental ability, and learning disorders (dyslexia); the clumsy child, overactivity, and brain damage are treated separately. Educational subnormality is confused with

mental subnormality and the significance and implications of medical factors in educational retardation are not made clear for the practising teacher. Blindness, deafness, cerebral palsy, epilepsy, and spina bifida are discussed in a long chapter on handicapped children; speech problems are covered separately. The book ends with chapters on common symptoms and diseases, infectious diseases, accidents, and psychoses.

There are two principal reasons why this book is unlikely to become a 'must' for teachers, whether they are qualified or in training. The first is its price. The second is that although it has a liberal sprinkling of references and other reading material, it is not sufficiently orientated to the child in school nor practical enough as a teacher's manual. For instance, in the management of the mentally handicapped child the paediatrician's responsibility is seen as trying '... to help the parents in their management of the child ...'; and in the prevention of accidents, 'Parents (and teachers) must always stop dangerous practices ...'; high-tone deafness is not explained and its only stated consequence for the child in school is lateness in talking and an inability to appreciate music; and whereas the relevance of 5 hydroxytryptamine, noradrenaline, and dopamine to mood regulation is mentioned, the use and care of hearing aids is not.

**Recent Advances in Paediatric Surgery.** No. 3.

Edited by ANDREW W. WILKINSON. (Pp. ix + 220; illustrated and tables. £7.00.) Edinburgh and London: Churchill Livingstone. 1975.

The third number in this series contains 16 excellent articles by 19 authors reviewing the growing fringe of surgical paediatrics. Many concern complications that may be encountered in surgical patients. Only 6 contributions are from surgeons, namely those on cardiac surgery, ureterovesical operations, abnormalities of the bile ducts, meconium ileus, stapled sutures, and laryngeal disorders. Paradoxically, this selection enhances the value of the volume, for like other specialists, surgeons are anxious to learn of advances in diverse fields that relate to their own work. Thus the subjects chosen include genetics, haematology, pulmonary function, anaesthesia, and respiratory intensive therapy, renal failure, chemotherapy for solid tumours, and immunology.

All the authors are experts in their own fields. The content of individual contributions has been adjusted largely to the needs of the surgical reader, but on occasion this task has been difficult. Language can present a problem, it is not easy for the uninitiated to comprehend a phrase such as 'a dimer with an extra polypeptide chain—secretory piece'. Elsewhere perfect understanding may depend on consulting a reference given in the text, such as that defining truncus arteriosus types I, II, and III. Some of the undefined abbreviations in initial letters will cause fewer problems, as most readers will know that PVC is polyvinylchloride and that IPPV is intermittent positive pressure ventilation. To comprehend the detailed advice on where, when, and how stapled sutures can be used in paediatric

operations requires access to the full range of autosuture instruments. It is perhaps unfortunate that most paediatric surgeons find that the opportunities to exploit their use occur too infrequently to allow the equipment to be mastered.

Every article contains information and advice which is sound, helpful, and seldom controversial. On the last score an exception is the superbly balanced analysis of controversy in the management of myelomeningocele. This, however, advocates that when ventriculitis supervenes in the 'untreated' child, adequate analgesia with diamorphine should be ensured, without emphasizing that in certain circumstances it might prove excessively difficult to convey sincere conviction in justifying this action.

Errors are few, but some have been overlooked; for example, bleeding time is not estimated on a sample of venous blood. The illustrations are clear and contribute to the text, the references to recent literature are invaluable, and the index is carefully compiled. No paediatric surgeon can afford to be without this book, which contains excellent value for the inevitably higher price.

**Serotonin in Down's Syndrome.** Edited by MARY COLEMAN. (Pp. x + 224; illustrated + tables. U.S. \$15.50). Amsterdam: Elsevier. 1973.

In a nutshell, 5-hydroxytryptophan (5HTP) does not help infants with Down's syndrome but may cause undesirable side effects such as temporary slowing down of psychomotor development, hyperactivity, and EEG abnormalities, sometimes associated with convulsive phenomena.

This study was necessary for the examination of the earlier premise that 5HTP might be of therapeutic value in Down's syndrome. In view of these disappointing results, however, the reader can be forgiven for losing some interest in much of the remainder of the book. Moreover, in places the text requires careful reading to avoid misinterpretation: for example the promising results of 5HTP administration in the uncontrolled early study include 'earlier development of

equilibrium and balance, improvement in the mean age of walking, increased activity levels, parental reports of improvement in strabismus and tongue protrusion with variation of 5HTP doses, and lack of cardiac disease in a (selected) initial group of patients'. These findings were not confirmed by the later double-blind trial. Caution also needs to be exercised in the interpretation of the horizontal and longitudinal studies on blood serotonin levels—which are in fact not of serotonin but of total 5-hydroxyindoles. The latter values are usually close to those of serotonin in untreated subjects, but may be appreciably higher in those receiving 5HTP. Why is there a whole chapter on 'other methods of raising serotonin', when this appears to do more harm than good? The book contains interesting data, but these are sometimes difficult to extract and evaluate.

**The Bronchial Provocation Test.** By KJELL AAS. (Pp. ix + 109; 24 figures + 10 tables. U.S. \$14.75.) Springfield, Illinois: Thomas. 1975.

This concise book is a detailed account of the methods and scope of bronchial allergy testing written by one of the foremost authorities on the subject. Techniques of performing bronchial challenge tests are described in some detail, together with various methods of assessing results. Standardization of allergen extracts, the accuracy and the reproducibility of the test are also discussed. The final chapter gives the author's views on when bronchial provocation should be used and makes the important point that in many clinically obvious situations—both positive and negative—this time-consuming procedure is often not needed. For anyone interested in the practical aspects of bronchial allergy evaluation this book is a most useful store of information. It is written very much as a handbook, with extensive references to the literature, but the reader will need to seek out relevant portions which are not always presented in the easiest manner. Many investigators of course are not convinced of the need to perform bronchial provocation in asthmatic children, but for those who wish to do so, reference to this book will ensure that they carry out their tests in the best possible manner.

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