

participants included paediatricians, community physicians, epidemiologists, and statisticians, and several countries other than the United Kingdom were represented. The conference considered the subject in three sections—children as victims of environmental hazards, methods of recognition and control, and the responsibilities of the physician—and the ensuing discussion is given at the end of each section. The papers in the first section included discussions on air pollution, and chemical and physical environmental hazards; the effects of malnutrition, nonaccidental injury, and child-minding on development; and psychosocial and iatrogenic hazards. In the second section the collection of national statistics, and the role of birth defect surveillance were examined, together with an international view contributed by a WHO spokesman. Finally a community medicine specialist and a hospital paediatrician discuss their roles.

This is an enlightening and for the most part cogently argued presentation of facts and figures relating to the child's broader environment. As the many infectious and nutritional diseases of the past have come steadily under control, paediatricians will be increasingly concerned with these other aspects which may have such important effects on the future well being of their patients and children in general. Differing problems and emphasis in other countries such as Sweden, Denmark, and the United States, together with variations within the United Kingdom, make interesting reading. The able discussants who have contributed to this conference leave one in no doubt of the environmental problems facing the child and those who care for him today. What is not so clear, and indeed this was not their brief though touched on in discussion, is how the problems should be tackled. The task even in our own relatively prosperous country is a daunting one. Perhaps a future Unigate conference can address itself to this important question and again earn our gratitude.

Movement and Child Development. Clinics in Developmental Medicine No. 55. Edited by K. S. HOLT. (Pp. viii + 182; illustrated + tables. £5.00.) London: Heinemann Medical for Spastics International Medical Publications. 1975.

This latest book in the 'Clinics in Developmental Medicine' series is concerned with various aspects of movement, hypothetical, experimental, and practical. It has four sections, 'The Importance of Movement for the Child' (20 pp), 'The Development of Movement and Motor Skills' (100 pp), 'Recording Children's Movements' (26 pp), and 'Therapeutic and Educational Applications' (30 pp). It does not try to catalogue development of movement in children, though its cover illustration might give this impression. There are several delightful review essays which, in keeping with the other chapters, have copious and relevant references.

Three chapters (66 pp) are by Ann Harrison and relate to or describe two series of experiments on normal and spastic (cerebral palsy) subjects. They make fascinating reading, particularly the second series of experiments showing improved neuromuscular control

in spastic subjects when provided with an electromyographic feedback. The section on recording children's movements disappoints by being too short to allow any but one of the authors to do justice to their subjects.

'Therapeutic and Educational Applications' includes, among other things, short chapters on stimulating movement by physical education and music; a brief review of physiotherapy techniques used in cerebral palsy; and a report on an intervention programme designed to overcome the possible effects of impaired mobility on the general development of spina bifida children.

There is much to commend this thought-provoking book, but somehow, for the reader, the whole is less than the sum of its parts.

Basic and Therapeutic Aspects of Perinatal Pharmacology. Monographs of the Mario Negri Institute for Pharmacological Research. Edited by P. L. MORSELLI, S. GARATTINI, and F. SERENI. (Pp. xv + 440; tables + graphs. U.S. \$30.50.) New York: Raven Press; Amsterdam: North-Holland. 1975.

The contents of this book are based on a symposium held in Milan in June 1974. There are altogether 40 contributions, grouped in eight sections some of which loosely overlap, though there is little or no repetition in the presented material. This was an international meeting, but there is only one paper from the United Kingdom, on the development of the hepatic microsomal drug-metabolizing enzymes in the ferret, a measure perhaps of the paucity of clinical research being undertaken here in this important field. A wide range of topics is discussed, the human baby being nicely interspersed with the experimental animal. Some of the studies reported are very technical, and the pharmacological language makes heavy reading. Yet the practitioner of neonatal medicine will find a good deal else to interest and instruct him.

Some of the reasons why perinatal pharmacology is unique are clearly stated in the two opening papers; and psychophysiological measurement of drug toxicity is briefly but pithily dealt with. We learn, for example, that intrapartum anaesthetics and analgesics cause changes in infant behaviour which are not transient but extend to at least one month of age. The presence of a complete cholinergic system in the human placenta is described. A scoring system for evaluating and treating neonatal narcotic withdrawal symptoms is put forward, and some of the reasons for greater tolerance of digitalis in the newborn are explained. These are just a few of many important topics discussed, and the symposium is fittingly concluded by a consideration of the ethics of perinatal pharmacological investigation.

This book makes the reader aware of the wide horizons of this subject, and of its very great importance for the child. Research workers would want to consult it. The clinician would do well to dip into parts of it, for there are a number of helpful references here not ordinarily seen in general paediatric reading.