BOOK REVIEWS.

Child and Adolescent Life in Health and Disease—A Study in Social Paediatrics, by W. S. Craig, B.Sc.(Glas.), M.D.(Ed.), F.R.C.P.E., F.R.S.E. Price 25/- Edinburgh: E. & S. Livingstone Ltd. 1946.

The author has broken new ground in writing this book which deserves the attention of all interested in child welfare, from the Health Visitor and social worker to the expert paediatrician. "The present day picture of the provisions for the care of child life and health can be compared to an unfinished jig-saw puzzle." Dr. Craig elaborates this idea and in his description of the existing measures for the care of the child, lays bare the discrepancies.

The work is divided into three parts with an extensive appendix.

Part I. consists of an historical survey beginning with the charity schools of the eighteenth century, the workhouses and the foundation of orphanages. Later, special hospitals for children came into being and Dr. Craig points out the high death rate occurring in these institutions which, he says, gives the aspect of charnel houses rather than hospitals. This survey extends up to the present time, including the organisation of the infant and child welfare services. The terrible conditions under which children were brought up throughout the industrial era are described and illustrated, but in this general survey, it is worthwhile to comment on the fact that progress, both through voluntary effort and by various Acts of Parliament, was constantly being made to improve the lot of the small child. These efforts led to the institution of such societies as the Ragged School Movement, later known as the Shaftesbury Society, Dr. Barnardo's Homes and the Invalid Children's Aid Association, all of which are still contributing to the welfare of children.

In Part II. there is a full description of the complex and over-lapping arrangements for the care of the child at the present time, both in health and in sickness even to a chapter on the conditions prevailing during total war.

In Part III. Dr. Craig discusses the future and rightly makes a plea for the co-ordination of the existing measures for infant and child care. Public opinion will ultimately determine the scale and standards of the provisions to be made.

The book contains 200 illustrations, many of them depicting scenes from the life during the mid nineteenth century. Professor Charles McNeil, who has just retired from the Chair of Child Life and Health at Edinburgh University, writes the foreword.

The book is presented on excellent paper and bears no trace of war-time austerity. It reflects great credit on all concerned with its production and deserves to be widely read in other countries as an English social history of children.

Practical Anaesthetics, by J. Ross MacKenzie, M.D., D.A 2nd edition. Price 10/6. London : Baillière, Tindall and Cox. 1946.

In this manual of anaesthetics the author's aim is to provide a foundation on which the medical student and hospital resident may build the practice of anaesthesia and analgesia. It is also intended as a guide to the general practitioner and the occasional anaesthetist. In this task he has succeeded admirably and at the same time his numerous references give ready information of the sources for further study. The chief characteristic of this book is its eminently practical nature and sound advice to be found throughout the text. The simple methods of anaesthetic administration receive careful attention and this, together with the inclusion of charts of the stages and signs of anaesthesia, will prove of great value to the general practitioner. Modern methods of general, local and spinal anaesthesia and of the preparation and after care of the patient are also described. The book is well written and well illustrated and there is no doubt of its continued success as a text book for students and practitioners.
Since the appearance of the first edition in 1936, this book has gained steadily in popularity in Britain. In the present edition the layout has been changed and the two column format has been introduced, this, together with good quality paper and clear type makes for easy reading. The illustrations, which are mainly confined to one column, are clear and well chosen. The material has been brought up to date as fully as is possible in such a fluid subject as physiology. This is not a work that can be recommended indiscriminately. To derive the fullest benefit from it, a fairly full preliminary knowledge of the subject is required. Its greatest value is to the senior student and particularly to the post-graduate reading for a higher qualification. To the junior student it is useful chiefly for reference purposes. Many of the subjects dealt with are of a complex character and oversimplification is neither possible nor desirable. The descriptions are however lucid with adequate reference to recent published work. On controversial topics the various theories are clearly presented and are followed by a judicious and impartial summing up. There is a useful bibliography, the references being collected at the end of the book and listed under chapters.

Clinical Pathology, by P. N. Panton, M.A., M.B., B.C., and J. R. Marrack, D.S.O., M.C., M.D. 5th edition. Pp. 450. Revised with the help of H. B. May, M.A., M.B., M.R.C.P. Price 21/- . London: J. & A. Churchill Ltd. 1945.

The object of this book is admirable—to fill an intermediate position between the more complete text-books on the subject and the small books which deal with only parts of the subject. This edition maintains the object by including a number of the more recent methods. Unfortunately, the necessity for brevity has been dominant in the authors' minds and many of the sections are too brief to be understood without previous knowledge—e.g. the photo-electric determination of haemoglobin and the subsection on Rh agglutinogens. If the copper sulphate specific gravity method is worth including for the determination of protein in serum, why not expand it slightly and include the nomogram whereby haemoglobin can also be estimated?

The section on Bacteriology gives a very good account of the various organisms but contains several traps for the unwary—C. xerosis is described as rarely giving Neisser's reaction, and in describing the Widal reaction in inoculated persons, no mention is made of the possibility of an anamnestic reaction, which is as commonly found as a constant or falling titre. Technical details are frequently so brief that they are of no use to a person who does not already know them. The illustrations of organisms are often given with stains which do not show their characteristic diagnostic points (e.g. gonococci stained by carbol-thionin).

In the histological section, the technical methods are adequate and the descriptions good, as far as they go. Unfortunately, the specimens met with in routine work rarely fit in with the very typical descriptions, whether of tumours or types of inflammation, and a person working with routine would require more assistance than this book can provide.

In general, the presentation of the book is attractive but marred by unnecessary errors—a reference to plate XI. is given on p. 291, for a photograph of amorphous urates, whereas the illustration in previous editions has been replaced in this edition by a poorly focussed photograph of sulphonamide crystals; the legends to illustrations on plate VI. have become misplaced; and other spelling errors in the text spoil the otherwise good effect.

On the whole, this is not a book to be recommended for students, on account of the mistakes, nor for general practitioners, as many of the descriptions are too brief; its main use appears to be as a ready and compact aid to memory for the specialist.
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The Peripheral Vascular System in Health and Disease, by Robert L. Richards, M.D. 1st Edition. Pp. 153. Price 21/- Edinburgh: E. & S. Livingstone, Ltd. 1946.

The initial chapters embracing the peripheral circulation in health prove an admirable synopsis and the relevant literature is well presented. The chapter headed 'Methods of Study' albeit qualified by 'with particular reference to the recording of skin temperature' would be improved by more detailed consideration of 'the cardinal methods of inspection and palpation.' For example—to dispose of skin colour and temperature thus—a warm pale skin, a cyanosed warm skin and a red cold skin all have their own particular significance (Lewis 1936) 'is unjustifiable in a work of this nature.

The chapters, four in number, on the peripheral circulation in disease, fail completely to warrant such a title. That headed 'Oclusive Vascular Disease,' by far the shortest, affords but a landfall without permitting definition even of part of the coast. It is of little value. The chapter on the Raynaud Phenomenon, in essence, consists of analysis of 30 personal cases with clinical observations, a report of the morbid anatomy of an amputated digit and an assessment of preganglionic sympathectomy presented largely on the histories of two patients. On the remaining chapters on Peripheral Nerve Injuries and the Immersion Foot Syndrome, the author is to be congratulated not only on the clinical observations but also on the compilation of such a complete survey. It must be pointed out that such detail devoted to a restricted aspect of the title but emphasises the remarkable absence of balance.

The index demonstrates further this absence of balance. To quote two examples:—'Arteriography' has references to five pages and refers to the occurrence of the work in text. 'Thromboangiitis obliterans' has references to four pages.

P. 56 'Thrombosis in an artery is most commonly the result of disease of the vessel wall (arterio-sclerosis, thromboangiitis obliterans, syphilis).'

P. 58 'Cases of thrombo-angiitis obliterans in the young fail to respond (to reflex vaso-dilatation) even if the disease has not progressed so far as to cause local peripheral gangrene.'

P. 65 'Young people with thrombo-angiitis obliterans sometimes develop peripheral gangrene without ever having experienced claudication.'

P. 72 'It (Raynaud Phenomenon) is not a common symptom of thrombo-angiitis obliterans.'

This work cannot under any circumstances be regarded as text on peripheral vascular system in disease as implied by the title. It would have been better presented as individual papers in a journal where the information, indeed of great value, would have been just as accessible and infinitely less expensive.

'A Charter for Health,' by a Committee of the British Medical Association, Pp. 95. Price 6/- London: Geo. Allen and Unwin, Ltd. 1946.

This little book contains much sound common sense. It sets forth the guiding principles in relation to the modern approach to health problems in their widest sense. The plan of attack is along sound lines with due stress being given to the primary factors of decent housing, good working conditions and a proper attitude to food and cooking. The importance of the home environment, and of a happy family life is stressed, and I agree entirely with the necessity for including a course of domestic science training for all senior schoolgirls, including an elementary course in mothercraft.

It is a sane approach to the problem of the preventable diseases and is well written and easily read.

Some interesting statistics are included and the observations on the birth rate are interesting; there is food for thought in the startling fact that whereas fifty years ago the average size of family was five, today the figure is only two.

The B.M.A. are to be congratulated on publishing this critical analysis of present-day health problems especially at this juncture when the whole subject is in the melting pot.