

The translation is pitiable. For instance, what on earth is meant by "to absorb any secretion (sic) of the sanies that might follow" (p 172)? And spelling mistakes are fairly frequent. The propaganda is not even disguised: for instance, "medical training under the Soviet system should combine theoretical natural sciences, special clinical subjects and the philosophy of Marxism-Leninism" (p 61).

Readers will be surprised to learn that it was 1940 when Austria and Czechoslovakia were occupied by Hitler's Germany, and although the Finnish campaign is mentioned in passing there is no mention of Russia's attack on Poland in 1939. The author's account of his war experiences is perhaps the most interesting part of the book. Certainly I was fascinated to read that in the early days the evacuation of the wounded was achieved by getting the second lieutenant in charge of the hospital's administration unit to stand at the crossroads, stop lorries going to the rear, and try to persuade the drivers to take some wounded along. As I seem to remember, Wellington reprimanded McGregor for doing this very thing in the Peninsular war.

One surprising revelation to me is to see how his description of the role of the commissar in the field medical unit parallels the role of the chaplain in the British Army. The commissar saw his mission as conducting friendly confidential chats with the wounded and the hospital staff, especially those who were feeling low. "Yes, our commissar was a great one at reassuring people, encouraging them and planting the seeds of hope in their hearts" (p 142). He draws a nice picture of the consultant physician whose field kit was always full of powders, phials, bandages, and mustard plasters; "he also carried an instrument for measuring blood pressure just in case. He even had a set of cups, which he could apply as expertly as a trained nurse" (p 171).

While one cannot recommend this book unreservedly, it is full of little vignettes and oddities which will interest many who wish to know something about Russian medical matters.

J C WATTS

Textbook of Paediatric Nutrition

Eds Donald S McLaren and David Burman. (Pp 416; £15.) Churchill Livingstone. 1976.

Growth and development are major factors which differentiate paediatric from adult practice. As both are so dependent on the quantity and quality of nutrition, an understanding of paediatric nutrition is essential for good paediatric practice. This book, written by 23 contributors, goes a long way towards providing the necessary information on which to base such an understanding.

After a historical introduction the book is divided into four parts. The first considers nutrition in growth and development from fetus to adolescent. Much information is given, but there is room to doubt some of the conclusions. The first part ends with a useful section outlining the difficulties in making nutritional assessments. Part 2 deals with protein energy malnutrition (PEM), vitamin deficiency, toxicity and dependency, deficiency and toxicity of elements, and the obesity syndrome. More precise recommendations might have been made on the use of available local foods in the prevention and treatment of

PEM and deficiency states of vitamins and elements. Metabolic disorders, nutrition in systemic disease, and parenteral nutrition are discussed in part 3. In the final section social factors in childhood malnutrition and the implications for "caring" professions and governments are considered.

Teachers and postgraduate students of paediatrics and nutrition, for whom this book was specifically written, will find valuable information in the text but will in some instances be looking for more explicit advice on the practical applications of the information given. The book will be of value in the libraries of paediatric departments.

FORRESTER COCKBURN

Sports Medicine

2nd edn. Eds J G P Williams and P N Sperry. (Pp 547; £23.50.) Edward Arnold. 1976.

Anybody wishing to know what sports medicine is will find the answer in this book, with its international team of contributors. The opening chapters deal with psychological, physiological, and biomechanical aspects of sporting activity. Then there are chapters on general medical aspects and a particularly useful one on the cardiological conditions of sportsmen and women. The remaining half of the book deals with the injuries of sporting activities, and it is a pity that the approaches differ in the different chapters on injuries of the various parts of the body. In some there are introductory passages that are aimed perhaps at trainers and others without much medical knowledge, but it is difficult to imagine that such readers will in fact have much reason or opportunity to consult a book like this. The best chapters deal methodically with the injuries of sport, their recognition, and in outline with any surgical treatment, while going into more detail for other methods of treatment.

One may criticise the quality of some of the x-ray films, occasional spelling mistakes, and the ghastly neologism enthesopathy, but one cannot get away from the fact that this book is the most comprehensive of its kind.

P S LONDON

Violence in the Family

Ed Marie Borland. (Pp 148; £5.95.) Manchester University Press. 1976.

One of the most astonishing aspects of violence within the home, even though the statistical facts are accepted, is the reluctance to believe that this mother or this father or this spouse could behave like that. Not only do we have to learn the gruesome facts, but we have to be reminded of them at regular intervals, and we have to know how to handle the situation. And "we" tends to expand from paediatricians and radiologists (who were first on the scene) to general practitioners, psychiatrists, social workers, police officers, magistrates, judges, their clerks of court, and beyond.

The literature grows apace, but for these reasons an addition such as Marie Borland's symposium needs no apology. The problems, procedures, and research findings from each of the disciplines involved are clearly and briefly stated by eight experts. Social adminis-

trators planning a practical attack on the problem will find all the guidance they need. For medical and social work students this can be recommended as a reliable handbook. For others it cannot fail to increase understanding. The editor has avoided repetition, and the price by today's standards is reasonable.

The only criticism is that some mention might have been made in the legal section of the possible advantages of wardship procedures. Any person having a genuine interest in a child may issue a summons which will be heard in the Chancery court, where the child will have the advantage of its own, quite independent, legal representation through the Official Solicitor. In other courts the social worker or doctor may know the perils which the child runs but may not have the opportunity to have them stated in court.

P D SCOTT

The Management of Labour

Proceedings of the Third Study Group of the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists 1975. Eds Richard Beard, Michael Brudenell, Peter Dunn, and Denys Fairweather. (Pp 276; £2.50 + 50p postage.) Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists. 1975.

In October 1975 the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists set up a small study group to examine and discuss current practice and trends in the management of labour. The group considered the induction and augmentation of labour, the assessment of fetal wellbeing in labour, and the effects on the fetus and newborn of certain events in labour. The editors have collected in this book the opening papers presented to the study group together with a report on the discussions that followed. There are papers and comments by obstetricians, paediatricians, physiologists, nurses, anaesthetists, a journalist, and the president of the National Childbirth Trust.

This was a good subject to pick, for it is important, has been studied extensively these past few years, and has recently attracted a great deal of attention in the press, in magazines, and on television. It was especially appropriate for the college to invite a journalist and a member of the National Childbirth Trust to participate in the meetings.

Each paper has its list of selected references for further reading. The text is well illustrated and the whole presentation reflects considerable credit on the editors and on the college. It is a thoroughly up-to-date account of recent developments in the management of labour enhanced by constructive comments from an informed audience.

J K RUSSELL

SELECTED TITLES

Intestinal Ion Transport. Ed J W L Robinson. (Pp 430; £12.50.) Medical and Technical Publishing. 1976.

Biochemistry and Neurology. Eds H F Bradford and C D Marsden. (Pp 298; £6.80.) Academic Press. 1976.

Current Trends in Spingolipidoses and Allied Disorders. Advances in Experimental Medicine and Biology. Eds Bruno W Volk and Larry Schneck. Vol 68. (Pp 612; \$54.) Plenum Press. 1976.