

Book Reviews

New Edition of "Price"

Price's Textbook of the Practice of Medicine. 10th edition. Edited by Sir Ronald Bodley Scott, K.C.V.O., M.A., D.M., F.R.C.P. (Pp. 1,259 + xiv. 90s.) London, New York, and Bombay: Oxford University Press. 1966.

It is a pleasure to welcome this new edition of Price. The problem of presenting within the compass of a single volume a comprehensive survey of modern medical practice is a herculean task almost beyond the wit of man. Sir Ronald Bodley Scott and his distinguished colleagues are to be congratulated on doing so well. A general criticism is that in many sections there is a certain lack of depth in the discussion of aetiology and of the biochemical aspects of disease with over-emphasis on the morbid anatomy. Perhaps too much space is devoted to the description of physical signs, particularly in respiratory diseases. These are of fundamental importance but are better left, in detail, to special books—for example, *Clinical Methods*, which deals with them so concisely and well.

Such faults as can be found are principally those of omission or of somewhat out-of-date emphasis. These are in large measure inevitable owing to the substantial gestation period of a work of this magnitude. The respiratory section would benefit from an account of the syndrome of respiratory failure, although this is dealt with to some extent under pulmonary heart disease. The account of the physiology of respiratory disease hardly reflects the great advances in this field, and it is very surprising to find no reference to Comroe in the recommended reading. A sharper distinction could have been drawn between diffuse bronchiectasis, which is part of chronic bronchitis and which provides no scope for surgery, and the localized type due to bronchial obstruction, where surgery can be curative.

The section on myocardial infarction does not do justice to the modern treatment of cardiac arrest, and many physicians would not endorse the recommendation of as long a period of bed rest as four to six weeks.

Here and there, as in the omission of mention of the ocular dangers of chloroquine therapy, opportunities are lost of pointing out the increasing importance of drug-induced disorders.

These are all minor criticisms offered with humility. This book, supplemented by regular attention to the editorials and annotations of the *B.M.J.* and *Lancet* and the excellent articles of the "Green Journal" (*Amer. J. Med.*), should enable a physician to practise well.

The double columns are a great improvement, and the excellent standard of production at a remarkably modest price are worthy of the high standards of the Oxford University Press.

W. MELVILLE ARNOTT.

How Children Grow Up

Normality and Pathology in Childhood. Assessments of Development. By Anna Freud. (Pp. 273 + xii. 35s.) London: Hogarth Institute of Psycho-Analysis. 1966.

"Psychoanalysis is confession without absolution" according to G. K. Chesterton, whose ignorance of the subject was probably no more profound than that of most educated laymen—or, for that matter, most uninitiated doctors. As one of these, I suspect that rabid anti-analysts like Chesterton, vehemently denying that psychoanalysis has anything at all to offer, are themselves innocently demonstrating one of its main tenets—the irrationality of the unconscious mind. Terms such as rationalization, unconscious motivation, and inferiority complex have become part of every man's language and thinking. They may be used loosely, but they illustrate how some psychoanalytic ideas, once bitterly attacked and derided, have become accepted as common sense and indeed almost commonplace.

The author of this book, one of the most distinguished analysts of our time, focuses here on childhood. In doing so she disposes early of one old bone of contention. Psychoanalysis has been criticized for building a model of the child from a distance, by extrapolating back from the adult. Miss Freud is one of those who believe in observing children themselves. She gives an interesting account of the modifications which have resulted, and of the relations between child analysis and adult analysis. She presents material, too, for those reluctant to accept that the normal should be deduced from the abnormal. An outline of normal development in phases (as analysts see it) is followed by a discussion of the influences by which it may be modified. A clinically interesting classification of developmental abnormalities relates

them, not to symptoms, but more fundamentally to deviations from the normal pattern of growth towards maturity. The chapter headings are exciting and invite one to read on. Unfortunately for the general reader the text becomes so flavoured with analytic essences, so larded with tough technical terms, that for those unaccustomed to the diet it may well prove indigestible.

In a delightful and irreproachable sense jargon originally meant "the warbling of birds." Here the author is warbling, mellifluously and creatively, for the enjoyment and benefit of those of her own small subspecies—but not, alas, for others. Miss Freud is renowned for the simplicity and clarity with which she can convey complex ideas to those untrained in her own specialty. I hope that she will feel an obligation to write another book, on the same theme as this one but adapted for all those who are eclectically gathering and sifting information on how children grow up.

JOHN APLEY.

"Gibberd's Midwifery"

A Short Textbook of Midwifery. 8th edition. By G. F. Gibberd, C.B.E., M.D. (Lond.), F.R.C.S.(Eng.), F.R.C.O.G. (Pp. 495 + xi; illustrated. 45s.) London: J. & A. Churchill. 1965.

"Gibberd's Midwifery" has got many a student through his examinations, and now an eighth edition has appeared to continue the good work. The teaching is orthodox and sound—too orthodox in places, perhaps, but unassailably sound. The author's special interests become evident in the sections dealing with the mechanics of labour and forceps delivery, the toxæmias of pregnancy, and, particularly, in the re-written chapter on puerperal sepsis. These subjects are all very fully and interestingly discussed. The author's

well-known conservatism linked with his facility of expression breaks forth in many places. With regard to the use of the Kielland forceps, for example, he states: "In general, if an operator is skilful enough safely to rotate a head with Kielland forceps, he is likely to be so skilful that he has no need to employ them." He seems, however, to be over-grudging in his admission of the role which afibrogenaemia plays in obstetric practice. One also wonders whether he is wise to press traditional teaching so far as to suggest to the student—who always remembers the exception more easily than the rule—that a hot douche (115°–120° F.) is a safe treatment for post-partum haemorrhage, or that internal version in established labour is still an operation to be reasonably considered; and it is also surprising to read, with regard to the softening of the ligaments around the pelvic joints in pregnancy, that at the symphysis a separation between the bodies of the pubic bones may occur which "may amount to as much as one inch."

Nowhere is the author's questioning mind better reflected than in his trouncing (p. 297) of the extravagant claims made by some exponents of the modern cult for "training in childbirth." How well it would be if all our "do gooders" could read and digest his cautionary paragraphs.

A special section is devoted to the care of the infant after birth and to the injuries and disorders to which it is liable, and a final chapter is now incorporated dealing with the lessons learned from the Ministry of Health publications on "Confidential Enquiries into Maternal Deaths."

Without doubt this eighth edition will continue to provide the medical student with a sound grounding in obstetrical theory and practice. The text is easily read and the illustrations are clear and instructive.

J. CHASSAR MOIR.