

PROFESSIONAL REVIEW.

PEDIATRIC NURSING.

"Pediatric Nursing," by John Zahorsky, A.B., M.D., F.A.C.P., Professor of Pediatrics and Director of the Department of Pediatrics, St. Louis University School of Medicine, etc., assisted by Beryl E. Hamilton, R.N., Graduate of St. Luke's Hospital, St. Louis, is a book which should be widely studied by nurses, and more especially those concerned with the nursing of sick children. It is published in this country by Henry Kimpton, 263, High Holborn, London, W.C.1, price 16s. net.

The author, in his preface, tells us that "pediatric nursing, in conformity with the rapid progress of pediatrics, is rapidly undergoing modifications in practice. The prevention of disease, especially, is increasingly emphasised as successful preventive measures are discovered. Proper nutrition and the normal growth of the child have become the primary objects of the service. Furthermore, an increasing number of technical procedures valuable in the therapy of children are thrust upon us."

The book is divided into two parts. Part I is devoted to the science of pediatrics. Part II describes the technical work. "Since the nurse obtains her training in a hospital it is natural that a description of the hospital service to children forms the groundwork of her training." "Training," the author emphasises, "is manipulation, but reading is a help."

Pediatrics as a Science.

We wonder how many nurses could give an accurate definition of pediatrics if invited to do so. Here is Dr. Zahorsky's definition:—

"Pediatrics as a science treats of the growth and development of the child. The practice of pediatrics is concerned with those dietetic and hygienic measures which are known to favour normal growth and those procedures which prevent and cure the diseases of children.

"Pediatric nursing embraces all the technical performances generally grouped under the term nursing care of both sick and well children."

Practical Hygiene.

Concerning Practical Hygiene we read that "Hygiene is the science of health and embraces our knowledge concerning the influence of the environment on the health and growth of the child."

Referring to Mental Hygiene, the author writes that "A healthy mind is found in a healthy body. We speak of mental health in a person when there is a mental balance which meets the demands of daily life without irritation or boredom, and induces a happy, contented disposition."

Child Psychology.

We pass over much of interest in order to direct special attention to the chapter on "Child Psychology," a subject of which the importance is frequently not realised by nurses. The author states that he gives a brief outline of the principles of this science in order to assist the nurse in dealing with children and to prevent gross errors in instructing the mother. He tells us that "psychology is considered one of the most difficult of all the sciences; therefore its growth is very slow. In the past, most textbooks have been based on some preconceived principles which in the end have been partially or totally rejected. We must respect the new spirit of laborious research that has been started in many universities, but the data accumulated are as yet too meagre, from which to formulate many practical rules. . . . We must be content to choose some authority and, for the present, add the best of his teaching to our store of common-sense."

Dr. Zahorsky then gives an outline based on the psychology of Prof. McDougall, somewhat modified by

the writings of Prof. Knight Dunlop, the practical deductions being largely from the writer's own experience. He deals with the question under the following headings:—

(1) *The Instincts or Propensities.*—These form the foundation of that complex function of the brain known as intelligence. It is impossible, we are told, in most instances to draw a sharp line of demarcation between instinct and intelligence, the former merges gradually and imperceptibly into the latter. He then discusses briefly a few of these instincts—the instinct of combat, the food-seeking instinct, the instinct of repulsion, the instinct of escape, the social instinct (this is also called the gregarious instinct). The infant likes company and is very much distressed when left alone. The child seeks playmates and is unhappy when isolated; later he likes to be a member of a gang. Nostalgia and homesickness must be attributed to this impulse. Conflicts between this instinct and other propensities (as rage and self-assertion) are common sources of unhappiness. Then there are the instincts of self-assertion, and of curiosity, the acquisitive instinct, the constructive instinct, the instinct of appeal, the mating instinct, and the protective instinct.

The authors agree with Prof. McDougall that the mating instinct begins to play some part in the child's emotions at eight or nine years of age. Contrary to good authority, they cannot, they say, accept the view that the sexual impulse plays an important rôle in the physical development of the infant. The sentiment of love has a much broader field than that of lust. The nervous and glandular mechanism for this impulse, however, is present at birth, and under certain conditions may be aroused from its latency to a feeble activity even in young children.

The authors say that "the nurse should know that the child is born with certain impulses or propensities, some of which must be fostered, others kept under reasonable restraint, and still others repressed by educational methods."

(2) *The Emotions.*—"Children," we are told, "are known to be extremely emotional. Some are much more so than others. We need not try to define an emotion; as a synonym, the term strong feeling is satisfactory. . . . The expression of these emotions varies in infants, and the development of good and the suppression of undesirable emotions are requisites of culture. Emotions in children are invigorated by practice and suppressed by constant disuse. During the process of mental development, however, first one and then another emotion stands out conspicuously. The infant with a strong instinct of anger may become a docile and good-natured child, but the converse is also true."

Under the heading of the Emotions, the authors deal with habits, behaviour, development of psychological functions, the order of development, development of the emotions, concerning which we read: "One thing is certain, that the stimuli which arouse fear, anger, joy, loneliness, disgust, distress, curiosity, etc., constantly change during the process of growth. Therefore the clinical rule that the child will outgrow his misbehaviour almost invariably is based on actual experience."

"Undesirable impulses and habits are repressed by several methods: (1) substitution—that is, getting the child interested in something else; (2) disuse—that is, preventing the outbreak of the emotion by removing the cause; (3) creating a distaste for the act by punishment or negative practice; (4) firm and persistent resistance to the action; (5) finally the parent may ignore entirely the behaviour and let time effect a change."

The book contains many excellent illustrations, still further illuminating the text, which is clear and concise. Librarians should certainly make a point of including it in nurses' libraries.

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