

## ON NOTABLE BOOKS IN OUR HISTORY



Many physicians, professors in particular, from our Hospital have written handbooks and textbooks for physicians, students and patients. Professor Vlado Oberiter, our pediatrician and long-standing head of the University Department of Pediatrics decided to write a special handbook entitled *Od simptoma do dijagnoze u pedijatriji* (From Symptoms to Diagnosis in Pediatrics). It is a unique handbook in the Croatian medical, not only pediatric literature. On 900 pages of this book printed by Medicinska naklada from Zagreb, Professor Oberiter describes more than eight hundred syndromes. Why has Professor Oberiter de-

cidied to write such a handbook? He explains it best in his Foreword<sup>1</sup>. According to him, he embarked upon writing it because “making the diagnosis remains in the domain of a physician who knows how to observe and how subject the observed to sound reasoning”, in spite of diagnostic technologies and computers; because every clinical decision is ethical decision; and because physical examination is irreplaceable. Therefore, the book is intended for pediatricians and other physicians who frequently, being short in time, cannot dedicate enough of their time to observation of patient and reasoning, which then leads to diagnostic uncertainty as an unwanted phenomenon that is unfavorable for both the physician and the patient. This handbook contributes to solving this problem in the best way possible; as stated by the author, it is part of diagnostic strategy of each physician. At the end, Professor Oberiter believes that the book will stimulate and upgrade observation and reasoning. We do hope it is so. Namely, all people, not only physicians, wish to have good memory, especially when thinking about their profession, but not all are fully aware of it, as for example Samuel Johnson, famous English lexicographer, who said: “The true art of memory is the art of attention”. This unique book is certainly helpful in achieving this goal.

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### Reference

1. OBERITER V. *Od simptoma do dijagnoze u pedijatriji*. Zagreb: Medicinska naklada, 1999. (Predgovor/Foreword)

