Although diseases of children was not recognized as a special field of medicine by the medical schools and medical societies of this country until the middle of the last century, the history of American Pediatrics goes back to the middle of the eighteenth century. The literature of diseases of children of that period was reviewed in an interesting lecture on "The History of American Pediatrics" before 1800, delivered before the New York Academy of Medicine in 1901, and it is a curious fact that a large percentage of the articles published at that early time, and continuing well into the early nineteenth century, were devoted to discussion of the contagious and infectious diseases of childhood, principally the exanthematous diseases. Diphtheria, which was called 'Throat Distemper', or Angina Suffocativa, was described in an article published by Dr. Hammel Bard of Kings College,
New York, in 1771, and in 1780 Peter Middleton, M.D. wrote a letter describing what he called 'Local Membranous Croup.'

During the early years of the nineteenth century the literature of diseases of children increased rapidly and included a number of text books as well as special articles. An interesting example of these was an article by Dr. Benjamin Rush of Philadelphia describing what he called Cholera Infantum; this was one of the first descriptions of this disease published in America. A still more interesting early pediatric essay was a report of a case of congenital hypertrophic pyloric stenosis, written by Dr. Hezekiah Beardsley of New Haven. His report covered almost all of the features of this condition as we know it today.

The first American book on diseases of children published in 1825, was entitled 'Practical Observations on Diseases of Children' by Dr. George Logan of South Carolina. It was followed by five other works by Drs. William P. Dewees, John Eberle and David Francis, published between 1825 and 1843, and in 1843 Dr. James Stewart in a 'Text Book of Diseases of Children,' taught the specificity of the origin of infectious epidemic disease for the first time in America.

Before 1850 it was recognized that there was a growing need for special hospitals for the treatment of infants and young children, but it was not until 1854 that the 'Nursery and Childs' of New York, the first children's hospital on this continent was opened and it was followed in 1855 by a hospital for children in Philadelphia. Previous to the recognition in 1860 of pediatrics as a specialty, the subject of diseases of children was taught in the departments of Obstetrics and Diseases of women in the medical schools of this country. In that year Dr. Abraham Jacoby, one of the most outstanding of the early pediatricians of New York, received the appointment of Professor of Pediatrics in the New York Medical College on East Thirteenth Street, and in the following year, 1861, Dr. J. Lewis Smith was appointed clinical professor of diseases of children in Bellevue Hospital. These were the first professorships of diseases of children in the United States, and at that time Dr. Smith and Dr. Jacoby were the only physicians in New York practicing pediatrics; they were probably the founders of the pediatric specialty in the United States, and in 1862 Dr. Jacoby established at the New York Medical College what was probably the first systematic course in clinical bedside pediatrics. The Archives of Pediatrics, the first English Language Journal on diseases of children in America, began publication in 1884, and the section of Pediatrics of the New York Academy of Medicine held its first meeting in 1888.

In our own college, in conformity with the practice in all the medical schools in the country, the subject of diseases of children was included in the Department of Obstetrics and Diseases of Women and Children, and the first incumbent of this chair was Dr. Isaac M. Ward, whose first lectures were delivered in the session of 1863-64. Dr. Ward was succeeded in 1870 by Dr. E. M. Kellogg, and in 1875, Dr. Martin Deschere was appointed special lecturer on diseases of children, continuing in this position until 1881 when the Chair of Diseases of Children was established.
and Dr. Deschere was appointed to the professorship. His teaching attracted wide attention because of the clear concise English in which it was expressed and the indelible impression of the subject matter on the minds of his students. His exposition of the general principles of pediatric treatment and his teaching of homeopathic therapy in pediatrics made an ineffaceable impression on the memories of his students. Very few of those who had the good fortune to hear his lectures could ever forget the simplicity and clarity of his teaching. Born in Hamburg in 1847, his death in 1901 resulted in irreparable loss to our College and profession.

In 1895 Dr. Deschere appointed Dr. Simonson clinical assistant in pediatrics. At that time, although there was a small children's ward in the hospital, the out-patient department conducted a visiting service in the homes of the patients, and the physicians in charge were accompanied on their rounds by two members of the senior class, and he began his service in the department of pediatrics as assistant to Drs. Chase and Russell in the out-patient clinic and the bedside teaching. This children's visiting service in the homes was discontinued a little over a year later. About 1895 he was appointed quiz master in pediatrics and continued in this position and in the out-patient clinic until about 1899 when he was appointed instructor in pediatrics because Dr. Deschere's failing health made it necessary for him to restrict his teaching activities. After his death in 1901 Dr. Simonson continued as lecturer until 1904 when he became acting professor of pediatrics.

At the beginning of the epidemic of Anterior Poliomyelitis in the summer of 1916 Dr. Simonson was appointed a member of the Poliomyelitis Advisory Committee, representing the homeopathic hospitals of the City of New York, and at one of its early meetings the Commissioner of Health requested each member of the committee to arrange for the care of as many cases as our hospitals could care for. On receiving this request the trustees and Dr. Copeland decided to prepare Kunhardt and Bendict for this service. We kept the wards filled through the entire epidemic and the service provided a very interesting and valuable experience for the pediatric department and the few students who were in the City during the summer months.

In 1917 Dr. Simonson was appointed consulting physician on the Medical Board of the Willard Parker Hospital for contagious diseases, but the sectional teaching clinics were not inaugurated until the Fall of 1930. In this same year sectional pediatric clinics were commenced in the wards of Flower Hospital and the clinics of the out patient department. In 1918 he was appointed a special member of the American Board of the Metropolitan Hospital to enable the college to begin sectional pediatric clinics, and later succeeded Dr. Reuel Benson as director of the pediatric service when he resigned to become director of that service at the Fifth Avenue Hospital. The large children's service at the Metropolitan occupied almost the entire East pavilion and provided a wealth of valuable clinical material, both acute and chronic, for bedside teaching of pediatrics. In 1927 the teaching facilities were still further augmented by the opening of the

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Metropolitan Hospital outpatient department in East 88th Street and in 1933 when Flower Hospital was consolidated with the Fifth Avenue, another valuable addition to the facilities for teaching clinical pediatrics was obtained. In 1924 Dr. J. Van Wart Griswold became clinical assistant in the Department of Pediatrics and between then and 1934, Drs. Abraham Bohrer, Paul Barrus Johnson, Forris E. Chick, Herman Robbins and Isidore Frimmer were added to the staff of the Department. Of these, Drs. Griswold, Johnson and Chick hold Assistant Professorships and for a number of years have taught didactic pediatrics to the Junior class while Dr. Griswold has delivered a course of lectures each year on Infant Feeding.

In 1935, Dr. C. Michael Witzberger joined the pediatric staff as Fellow in Pediatrics and is now doing valuable work as a teacher in pediatrics and Head of the children's division of the outpatient department, and Dr. Reuel Benson, long an associate Professor of Pediatrics is now Professor of Pediatrics and Director of the children's service in the College and Director of children's service in the Flower-Fifth Avenue and Metropolitan Hospitals.

The pediatric staff also includes: Drs. Nathaniel J. Cohen, Hyman Finkelstein, Hyman Gellin, Leon Kellman, Saul A. Schwartz, Joseph Schwartzman, Abraham Wenger and Irving Weinberg.

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