

BOOK REVIEWS

Comparative Aspects of Haemolytic Disease of the New-born. By G. FULTON ROBERTS. (Pp. xi+199. 17s. 6d.) London: Heinemann. 1957.

This is an erudite little book, most amusing and interesting in its way and packed full of information. It is very rarely that the clinical, historical, pathological and comparative aspects of a disease are brought together in a single volume, but they are all here and discussed in a simple and readable style. It is not, however, by any means easy reading throughout and this is a book for the clinician who has some knowledge of the problem, or for the pathologist who does not wish to confine himself only to the finer points of serology, rather than the student.

The author has included up to date references and covers the literature fully. Some might find fault with his presentation of the case against premature induction of labour on page 138, but it would be unreasonable to make much of this.

In summary, this is a stimulating approach which might well be copied in respect to other diseases and which should remind many of us how little we know of the wider aspects of those diseases in which we are interested.

Affections Non Congénitales de l'Anus et du Rectum Chez l'Enfant. By JEAN DUHAMEL, with Preface by Professor Robert Debré. (Pp. vii+264; 110 figures. Fr. fr. 3,600.) Paris: Masson. 1958.

This book is based on a study of 450 cases of ano-rectal disorders treated at l'Hôpital des Enfants-Malades à Paris. In the examination of such cases, the author recommends the use of an angulated frame to keep the infant in the jack-knife position. The technique of instrumentation and its dangers are set out.

The cause, clinical features, pathology and treatment of all non-congenital, ano-rectal diseases are given in detail. The solitary polyp (140 cases) and rectal prolapse (90 cases) are the two commonest conditions; anal fissure, peri-anal abscesses and fistulae are fully described. The author's view throughout the book almost completely conforms with current teaching and proctological practice. All minor operative procedures are given in detail. A few points, however, may not receive general acceptance, namely, the use of the blind external route for the sub-mucosal injection of prolapsus ani, the use of a rubber seton in treating fistulae and the injection of antibiotics, after aspiration, into peri-anal abscesses. These procedures are given only as alternatives to the more orthodox methods.

Dr. Duhamel, who was a gastro-enterologist, shows his special interest in the chapters on proctitis, anal inflammation, constipation and encopresis. More rare affections, such as multiple polyposis, malignant and venereal disease, are also included.

This book is well illustrated, mostly by clear line drawings, but a few of the photographs are of poor

quality; there is a synopsis of each chapter and a useful bibliography.

The author is to be congratulated on producing this book on proctology in a special age group, for he has made available much useful information for all those called upon to treat these infant and childhood disorders. It is unfortunate that malformations and neonatal affections do not come within the scope of this book. Perhaps this omission can be remedied in a second edition.

Hydrocéphalie du Nourrison. By MARC RICHARD KLEIN. (Pp. 136; 37 figures. Fr. fr. 1,600) Paris: Masson. 1958.

This monograph of 133 pages attempts to deal with the whole problem of hydrocephalus as well as the physiology of the cerebrospinal fluid circulation. Unfortunately, it manages only to skate over the subject without giving precise data or references.

The 'classification' given merely lists tumours and lesions which may lead to hydrocephalus, and confuses rather than clarifies the problems. Investigation of such cases is dealt with in some detail, including the use of isotopes, which are, as yet, a research tool of only doubtful value. The clinical examination, however, is added as a postscript in a few lines at the end of the chapter.

Several operations are described, notably that of coagulation of the choroid plexus, which is the author's chief tool in combating the malady. Anaesthesia and post-operative problems are discussed at length.

Some of the diagrams are clear, though often irrelevant; others are confusing, while the clinical photographs are unhelpful, especially one of a hydrocephalic baby wearing a bonnet.

The impression gained from this monograph is that the author has compiled it at some speed without giving any deep thought to the problems involved.

Pseudarthrose Congénitale du Tibia et son Traitement. By M. GUILLEMINET and R. RICARD. (Pp. 98; 78 figures. Fr. fr. 1,800) Paris: Masson. 1958.

This is a review of the pathogenesis and treatment of congenital pseudarthrosis of the tibia, and is based upon a review of the literature and 14 personal cases of the author. Since three of these cases are too recent for assessment, and most of the others have already been reported elsewhere, it is difficult to appreciate the issue of this material in book form. The experience of the authors in the treatment of this condition lies largely in the field of inlay and sliding grafts to the tibia, with which they have had considerable success, but the bypass graft and the use of an intramedullary nail are also fully described. In such a beautifully produced book it is a pity that the bibliography is not complete, and contains minor inaccuracies.