

Urological Centres in this country or the United States of America. One is therefore forced to agree with Doctor Zapp when he states that it is unfortunate that in Germany paediatric urology is not practised by specialists in this field, but remains an appendage to adult urology.

Intussusception in Infants and Children. By MARK M. RAVITCH. (Pp. 121; illustrated. 76s.) Springfield, Illinois: Charles C. Thomas; Oxford: Blackwell Scientific Publications. 1959.

Intussusception is still a potential killer in young children, and anyone dealing regularly with this condition will find something of interest in Mark Ravitch's book. It is the first of a new series of paediatric surgical monographs, and is based on the author's experience at the Johns Hopkins Hospital, Baltimore.

The essential theme of the book is the treatment of intussusception by barium enema reduction. As soon as the diagnosis is made, an intravenous infusion is started. An ungreased 45 ml. Foley bag catheter is inserted into the rectum, the balloon is inflated, and the buttocks tightly strapped. The catheter is connected to a reservoir of barium at a height of 3-3½ ft. above the table. Thereafter, reduction is performed under fluoroscopic control. When the ileum is seen to fill freely, reduction is complete.

This technique in Ravitch's hands is curative in 70 to 75% of all cases. When reduction is incomplete (in 25 to 30%) it is completed by open operation through a McBurney incision, thus avoiding a centrally placed scar. Using this technique at the Johns Hopkins Hospital, in the 10 years from January 1948 to January 1958, there have been 52 cases, and no deaths. Incidentally, there were only two resections.

Ravitch is convinced, by his own experience and that of other clinics using this technique, that primary reduction by hydrostatic pressure is superior to and safer than open operation. Attention is drawn to the curious fact that the incidence of intussusception is much higher in Britain and Scandinavia than in the United States. There are only six to eight cases a year in Ravitch's clinic, contrasting with 30 to 40 cases a year in any big Children's Hospital in this country.

There is an excellent chapter on errors in diagnosis, leading to delay and even to death of the child. Common mistakes are misdiagnosing intussusception as dysentery, and preoccupation with an associated serious illness. This chapter contains much valuable information.

In the chapter on symptomatology and physical signs, the omission of 'pallor' is a curious one, since it is so common a feature.

There is a section on experimental studies on dogs, in whom intussusception was artificially induced. This

proves that the apex of the returning limb of the intussusception is the first to go gangrenous. This also shows that micro-organisms can be found on the serosal surface of the bowel in from four to 48 hours, and the more completely the blood supply is arrested, the more rapidly do they pass through the bowel wall. This underlines the importance of antibiotic therapy.

Resection procedures are discussed. Almost every manoeuvre has been tried at some time. Primary resection and anastomosis is still the treatment of choice and holds the field today, but in the extremely ill baby or with oedematous bowel of doubtful viability, there is a place for a decompressive resection of the Mikulicz type, coupled perhaps with anastomosis. Resections in any single clinic are so few that comparison of results is, in Ravitch's opinion, difficult.

Every clinic has experience of the child who arrives almost irretrievably moribund early in the disease. There is no full discussion in this book of that most important though still mysterious topic, the cause of death in this form of obstruction. There are no hints as to the possible aetiology of intussusception. This, too, remains a mystery.

The production as a whole is excellent, easy to read and profusely illustrated by first-class radiographic studies. There is a very full bibliography.

This book should be read by all those who are called upon to treat intussusception in childhood.

Kranke Sauglinge. Edited by C. H. VERBOOM. (Pp. xii + 367; 8 figs. D.M. 39.60.) Stuttgart: George Thieme. 1960.

As its title implies, this book deals with clinical conditions arising in infancy. There are 20 chapters, the lengthiest of which deal with illnesses in the newborn, congenital defects, feeding problems, vitamin deficiencies, infectious diseases and modern therapy. A chapter is devoted to tetany, infections of the cranial contents and acrodynia. Other subjects dealt with include diseases of the respiratory, urinary, haemopoietic and integumentary systems and of the ear, nose, throat and eyes. Emphasis is on treatment, including prophylaxis considered against the background of health in infancy. Intended for the practitioner, the publication is essentially a reference book. It is based upon the combined experience of six clinicians who practise their different specialities at the Infant Clinic of the University of Freiburg i.Br. Sound material is presented in highly concentrated form. Illustrations number only eight and all relate to laboratory aids. There are no references but a selected bibliography is provided. The book is unlikely to appeal on any large scale to paediatricians or general practitioners in this country.