

so forth, are all described in greater or lesser detail. One can only hope that no one will embark, for instance, on cardiac catheterization or paper chromatography after reading how to do it. Then again, some chapters are outstandingly good, such as those on liver function tests and haematology.

The second part starts with a sensible paediatric 'Extra Pharmacopoeia', but then goes on to discuss the merits of sulphur, carbon dioxide, mud, sand, meadow-flower, and many other baths. This is followed by a fascinating chapter on climato-therapy, much of which is surely not only non-science, but nonsense. Finally, there are chapters on diagnostic and therapeutic radiology, accidents and poisoning, and minor surgical procedures.

This fantastic paediatric *bouillabaisse* is magnificently produced by that Rolls Royce of continental publishers, the Springer-Verlag.

Hydrocephalus and Spina Bifida. (Developmental Medicine and Child Neurology Supplement No. 11.) (Pp. 95; illustrated. 8s.; \$1) London: Spastics Society Medical Education and Information Unit in association with William Heinemann Medical Books. 1966.

This small volume contains the proceedings of the Groningen meeting of the Society for Research into Hydrocephalus and Spina Bifida held from May 31 to June 1, 1965, and is a most satisfactory expression of the co-operation between the Society, the editors of the journal, and the publishers—the Spastics Society in association with William Heinemann Medical Books Ltd.

The volume contains the kind of mixture of clinical and experimental observations which is of most value in this rapidly expanding subject, and begins with a general review of the development of knowledge and treatment of hydrocephalus by G. H. Macnab who gave the first Cassy Holter Memorial Lecture on this occasion.

The statistical studies are represented by the papers of R. M. Laurence and of P. P. Rickham and T. Mawdsley which must be read in conjunction. The former gives detailed accurate figures of the incidence of congenital malformations of the CNS and, with the follow-up of these infants, presents a most useful picture of the natural history of such conditions as spina bifida cystica, against which Rickham and Mawdsley have been able to place their survival figures from Liverpool, where an ever-increasing percentage of the infants have been operated on. The results show that early surgery is greatly altering the survival rate of these infants, and they point to the necessity for further study of the quality of their survival and of the problems of managing an increasing number of incapacitated children.

The analysis of the treatment of infantile hydrocephalus, using the Holter valve, in 152 consecutive cases, by Forrest, Hole, and Wynne is another thoughtful statement of the results of surgical management, presented in a form that permits useful comparisons of the spina bifida and non-spina bifida types of hydrocephalus.

The complications of ventriculo-atrial shunts include

now the well-recognized entity of multiple pulmonary embolisms, and the pathological findings in this condition are described in detail by Erdohazi, Eckstein, and Crome. Hemmer from Freiburg has contributed a description of an extensible cardiac catheter which may well overcome some of the problems of growth and tension on the cardiac side of the shunt.

The embryological studies by G. J. van Hoytema and R. van den Berg from Enschede are outstandingly stimulating, and further investigations along this line may throw considerable light upon the mechanism of the hydrocephalus associated with spina bifida. Related to this topic are the graphic studies of brain-stem displacement, using angiography at necropsy, which were made by Emery; but the significance of these in relation to hydrocephalus is not yet clear.

Isotope ventriculography is a new tool in the investigation of hydrocephalus, which may throw some further light upon the dynamic aspects of the condition, but the short paper by Spoerri and Rösler on this method is disappointing in that it adds little to the findings which might be anticipated by conventional ventriculography.

Contribution à l'Étude Fonctionnelle du Poumon de l'Enfant Sain et de l'Enfant Asthmatique.

By F. GEUBELLE. (Pp. 255; illustrated. 2.50 francs.) Gembloux: J. Duculot, S.A. 1966.

This book contains an account of measurements of ventilatory function, lung volume, and certain aspects of the mechanics of ventilation in healthy and asthmatic children. There is little mention of the exchange of oxygen and carbon dioxide in the lung. There are no new ideas or techniques in this book, but the work is vigorously presented. It provides a useful source of normal values and the results to be expected in asthmatic children. The reader will also find an account of the principles underlying the tests employed, but this has been done better elsewhere in texts which have the exposition of pulmonary physiology as their primary aim. It would be very unfortunate if a student, anxious to understand how the lungs work, were to encounter such a dull book.

Hormone Assays and their Clinical Application.

2nd ed. By JOHN A. LORAIN and E. TREVOR BELL. (Pp. xv + 584; 116 figures + 33 tables. 65s.) Edinburgh and London: E. & S. Livingstone. 1966.

Since the publication of the first edition of this book in 1958, tremendous advances have been made in endocrinology. The new edition concentrates on work published between 1958 and 1965 and is in fact virtually a new book. It describes the assay of hormones including those of the pituitary gland, adrenals, and ovaries, and also insulin, prolactin, and catecholamines.

In general, hormone assays are complicated, laborious, and costly. It is, therefore, important that the practising clinician should only ask for and use them in patients in whom the results are likely to be of value. As the authors emphasize, hormone assays are still largely at