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.


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.


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
that stage where their main use is in advancing knowledge in endocrinology rather than in helping the individual patient. Such an authoritative book as this will, therefore, be of great assistance to the clinician, be he an endocrinologist or not, and laboratory workers in the field will also find much of interest.

The methods at present available are described in general terms. References to details of methods will help the laboratory worker, and the clinician will find the accounts unencumbered with too much detail.

This is a superb book and is highly recommended. It is clearly written, authoritative, and accurate. The long lists of relevant references are very helpful.


This small book of 128 pages tries to revive interest in the interaction between altered behaviour and phenomena related to seizures. Ictal states, ictal, and subictal phenomena are considered as a complex patho-physiological occurrence of relatively transitory nature. The author has certainly tried to do his best, but admits that ictal and subictal states cannot be unequivocally defined.

In addition to an introduction, this little book covers, in Chapter 2, the relation between ictal states and the temporal lobe—rhinencephalon-thalamus—complex. In Chapter 3 the 'epileptic equivalents' are described, and discussed, while Chapter 4 is devoted to the role of the EEG in ictal and subictal neurosis. The following chapters deal with precipitants and activators of ictal and subictal states, psychology of such states, their specific secondary symptoms (including headaches, anxiety and depression, visual phenomena, auditory phenomena, sexual disturbances, 'vegetative syndrome', hypochondriasis, automatism, etc.). The eighth chapter on 'Speculative Aspects of Epilepsy' stresses how 'every instance of excessively high temperatures could result in a potential victim of minute brain damage.'

Probable observations and science fiction are put together in such a way that the reader does not know any more on which side he might be. For example, at page 102 'in grandmal, all planes are taking off simultaneously without pilots and passengers during a fog; the same event takes place in petit mal and psychomotor epilepsy but is limited to only a few planes. Because of fog, the control tower cannot see or direct what is going on.'

The chapter on 'Therapy of Ictal and Subictal Neurosis' comes down in favour of diphenylhydantoin and against phenobarbital. In the brief summary of half a page the conclusion is that 'the prevalence of microscopic scars following minimal encephalitis as a result of childhood diseases or trauma is considerably greater than generally assumed. The resultant functional changes become a part of the individual's character, make-up or aggravate existing behavior problems.' Again unfortunately the author does not give factual information as to how he has reached this particular conclusion.

The bibliography of 12 pages (226 references) is included in this book, but the gaps are considerable.

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**British Association of Paediatric Surgeons**

The 13th International Congress of the British Association of Paediatric Surgeons was held in the Institute of Child Health, Guilford Street, London W.C.1, under the Presidency of Mr. W. M. Dennison, from Tuesday, July 5, to Friday, July 8, 1966. Some 160 surgeons from over 30 different countries attended the meeting. The Simpson Smith Memorial Lecture was given by Professor Sir Herbert Seddon, on 'The Crippled Child in the Tropics', and an Institute Lecture was given by Dr. Paul Bacsich, on 'Embryology 1984—The Shape of Things to Come'. During the scientific part of the meeting 24 communications on paediatric surgical subjects were delivered and on Thursday, July 7, in the afternoon, a symposium on Myelomeningocele and Hydrocephalus was given at Queen Mary's Hospital for Children, Carshalton, under the chairmanship of Mr. H. B. Eckstein and Mr. D. M. Forrest. The meeting was concluded on Friday, July 8, with the annual dinner at the Livery Hall, Guildhall, at which Mr. P. P. Rickham was installed as President for the years 1967/68.

The 1967 meeting of the Association will take place in Bremen, Germany, from July 18–21, 1967, and the 1968 meeting in Liverpool from July 17–20, 1968. All inquiries about future meetings should be directed to the newly-elected Secretary and Treasurer, Mr. James Lister, F.R.C.S., Children's Hospital, Western Bank, Sheffield 10.