
This book, based on a series of lectures given in the University of London in 1966, is 'an attempt to stimulate interest in the application of human cytogenetics to population studies'. In this Dr. Court Brown has been most successful and the work is a reflection of the valuable studies used, particularly findings and chromosome frequency surveys, particularly of results and readable addition will be useful in the future.


This work attempts to classify many of the congenital abnormalities of the human body, and abnormalities of limb bud development. The third section, which discusses the genesis and classification of double monsters, is probably the best account of this type of abnormality in the current literature.

The bibliography includesstandard references to the English, American, and European literature, and there is a useful teratological glossary. The illustrations throughout are excellent, especially the line drawings. The text is written in French that can easily be understood by those who are not too familiar with the language.

Essentially, the writers have gone back to the morphological approach first described in France by Isidore Geoffroy Saint-Hilaire (1832). They claim that the main message of the book is to highlight the mechanism of morphological malformation, that is to say the genesis of the deviation of embryological development, which results in the final deformity.

It is not intended to be a work of depth, however, and is not all-embracing. For example, there is no mention of chromosomal anomalies.

Obviously quite a lot of care has been put into the design of the tables and the layout of the book in general, and it is a tribute to the three authors that after the completion of such a work the senior should refer to M. Haegel and M. Pagès as 'mes amis et mes assistants'.


A distinction is made between inherited endogenous defects and non-inherited exogenous diseases acquired by the embryo and fetus; it is the latter that are dealt with in this book. The work is based on lectures given to medical students over the past 9 years. Already the subject has become too big for the author to review the literature in its entirety, though he has studied some 4000 references, more than 1000 of which are quoted. In particular, consideration of the normal development of fetal physiology is brief.

The main pathological processes dealt with include: infection, which takes up more than a quarter of the book; disorders resulting from defects of nutrition and hypoxia; intoxications; maternal diabetes; fetal haemorrhage; and prematurity. The information gathered together will be of immense value to anyone interested in the well-being of the developing fetus, though an inadequate index and unhelpful lay-out of the text somewhat detract from the value of the book as a work of reference.

This book underlines the division of responsibility and