1669, and the proceedings have now been published. The book, like its two predecessors, is beautifully produced, with high quality illustrations and skilled editing. It presents over 400 pages of exciting information covering all aspects of human teratology from DNA to epidemiology.

The first half of the book is concerned with cell biology, and describes laboratory work relating to cell division, the reactions of cells to one another, and communication between cells. Experiments with cell hybrids and nuclear transplantation parallel studies on racial crosses and immigrants later in the book. Some fundamental questions are discussed. Where, for example, is the point of no return in cell differentiation? Can an ovum pass its prime before fertilization?

Clinicians may find themselves more at home in the second half of the book. Dr. Maroteaux delineates the clinical features and genetics of the many conditions characterized by short-limbed dwarfism and helps us to decide, when is an achondroplastic not an achondroplastic? Dr. Cedric Carter discusses multifactorial inheritance, and Professor Polani brings us up to date on sex chromosome problems.

There are many reports on population studies of the incidence of malformations, including valuable data from Hawaii on racial crosses. Of great interest are preliminary reports of long-term current studies of factors affecting human growth and development. A very thorough study from Japan on malformations and chromosome defects in abortions reminds us that, notwithstanding the population explosion, a viable newborn human has already survived a pretty rigorous selection procedure.

The final group of papers relates to clinical management. Prenatal diagnosis has so far centred round the recognition of abnormal chromosomes and obscure metabolic disorders. It seems likely, however, that this is a field in which expansion may be confidently predicted.

Every paediatrician interested in birth defects (and which can afford not to?) will enjoy this book.


The management of cerebral palsy has always been surrounded by a certain amount of mystique and complexity, possibly because so little is known about the effects of any particular mode of treatment in a condition with such a wide spectrum of affliction and variation in natural history. Until recent years, peripheral orthopaedic operations had been confined to a few standard procedures such as elongation of the tendo calcaneus and then only in the face of severe and disabling deformity. There was always the fear that the surgeon might make the condition worse or that the deformity would recur.

A direct approach to the analysis of spasticity, paralysis, and deformity in cerebral palsy has shown that careful surgery correctly applied at the right time can confer considerable benefit when combined with continuing treatment by physiotherapy and overall attention to the multiple aspects of the disability that these children suffer.

Dr. Keats' book gives a careful and studied review of operative procedures and their results, and analyses the procedures described in the literature to provide the reader with an extensive potential repertoire. At the same time, he is careful to describe the indications for the procedures that he recommends and the results that may be expected of them.

All orthopaedic surgeons are likely to encounter some cerebral-palsied patients in their practice and those who join with paediatricians and physical medicine specialists or physiotherapists in the treatment of cerebral palsy will see a continuing flow of afflicted young children every year. This book provides a convenient and authoritative reference source for many operative procedures that may benefit their patients, especially in the correction and prevention of disabling deformity and the preservation of the best function that can be achieved.


It is perhaps fitting that the first volume of a series on Surgical Conditions in Infancy and Childhood should be devoted to Hirschsprung's disease, a condition whose pathology and aetiology remained in a confusion for 60 years. The solution of its nature and the principles of its treatment have only been achieved over the past 20 years, and depended very largely on the evolution of paediatric surgery as a specialty.

The book first covers the history of the disease, the basic morphology, pathology, and pathophysiology, with a study of the aetiology, followed by a general survey of the symptomatology of the disease and its various presentations in infancy and in older children and adults. There follows a section on the rationale and principles of surgical treatment, an analysis of the results of the various operative procedures, and an attempt to recommend the best procedure. The author admits that personal preference still plays a large part in the choice of operation.

Though recognizing the reluctance of certain distinguished authors to equate aganglionosis with Hirschsprung's disease, the author believes this is the most important contribution ever made in the history of the disease and has provided a firm ground for scientific and clinical development. In a review of world literature he has estimated the world incidence of the disease as well as such features as sex distribution, hereditary factors, and associated abnormalities. Quoting from Hirschsprung's original paper he emphasizes that commonly this is a disease of the newborn and so-called pseudo-Hirschsprung's disease, ultra short segment disease, and Hirschsprung's disease presenting in later childhood or adult life are rare variations.

The author reviews his own series of 124 consecutive