1969, 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 be?) will enjoy this book.

Operative Orthopedics in Cerebral Palsy. By Sidney Keats. (Pp. xii + 243; illustrated. £13.00.) Springfield, Illinois: Charles C. Thomas. 1970. 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.

Hirschsprung's Disease. By Theodor Ehrenpreis. (Pp. 175; 44 figures + 22 tables. £6.30.) Chicago: Year Book Medical Publishers. 1970. 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 aganglionicism 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-Hirschspring's disease, ultra short segment disease, and Hirschspring's disease presenting in later childhood or adult life are rare variations. The author reviews his own series of 124 consecutive
patients with only 6 deaths, 4 of these deaths occurring in the 66 children who were treated in their first year of life, and all these 4 in the early part of the series. Ehrenpreis compares his 6% death rate with a death rate varying from 20% to 43% in four other series reported by distinguished paediatric surgeons. The care with which he searches for an explanation of this difference is a measure of his modesty. The year of treatment (with regard to the experience of the surgeons concerned), the age of the patients, the extent of the aganglionic segment, enterocolitis, and bowel perforation do not vary sufficiently in the series to explain the difference in the mortality rates. External factors as distinct from the inherent factors are sought and it is shown that the vast majority of deaths in all the series except his own occurred before definitive operation. It is suggested that the blame lies not on management in a paediatric centre but on inadequacy of treatment before reaching that centre. The early transfer of infants with symptoms and signs of intestinal obstruction to centres adequately equipped for the diagnostic and therapeutic management of such children is strongly recommended.

His personal approach to the management of the disease is simple but effective. Diagnosis is made on clinical and radiological grounds; there is no great hurry because the child is going to be conservatively treated. Only in exceptional cases is a rectal biopsy performed. Treatment by intestinal washouts with saline solution is given as often as is needed, perhaps every second or third day. The mother is taught the technique of colonic washout and the child allowed home. In a very small number preliminary colostomy is performed. A definitive procedure is carried out fairly early and frequently at the first admission.

This is a valuable book for the specialist surgeon in its wide review of the subject and extensive bibliography, and for many others in its simply worded clear outline of the pathophysiology of the condition. The reading is easy and the illustrations good.


There is as yet no very satisfactory shorter textbook on child psychiatry, so that one reviews this relatively new American volume with special interest. What comes across immediately is the individual work style and sense of dedication of the authors—refreshing in an age of so many faceless compilations. Regrettably it is too idiosyncratic for other than the postgraduate in psychiatric training. Much is made of using a humorous approach to the young patient, which may be fine for the experienced clinician, but potentially disastrous for the beginner. There is something in the assertion that physical examination seldom contributes much to assessment, but not much.

‘Childhood schizophrenia’ is the term used to cover psychosis and autism, but neither the nomenclature nor its implications will commend itself to many British readers. Also it seems odd in such a chapter to find no references to the work of Annell in Sweden, Creak in the U.K., or Rimland in the U.S.A. In the discussion of ‘school refusal’ no mention is made of depression, nor of important ‘triggers’ such as accidents, physical illness, or bereavement. Among the causes of brain damage there is no reference to hyperbilirubinaemia or hypoglycaemia in infancy.

In the treatment chapter there is no account of day hospital care, psychodrama, or of Ginot’s excellent monograph on group therapy. This is, moreover, a child-orientated approach with little awareness of the subtleties of family dynamics in diagnosis or treatment, nor of the contribution to the social worker, except as a history gatherer. The main facts relating to aetiology and clinical procedures, some specific syndromes, and psychopharmacology are presented clearly, and the book is well produced. It can be recommended to the specialist department in child psychiatry as a useful addition to the library, but neither to the paediatrician nor to the medical student.