

children, the section on clinical investigation is least satisfying.

Though most practising paediatricians will be familiar with a large proportion of the material in this book, the several chapters consolidate the background of therapeutic choice. Much of the basic information can be abstracted for teaching, and extensive lists of references lead one to the original researches. Practitioners and senior students will find readable accounts of important aspects of therapy. The specialist research worker will not in any case be looking in this direction for references.

Ano-rectal Malformations in Children. By F. DOUGLAS STEPHENS and E. DURHAM SMITH. (Pp. xvi + 411; 159 illustrations + 39 tables. £11.70.) London: Lloyd-Luke; Chicago: Yearbook Medical Publishers. 1971.

This is an exceptionally good book. The authors have studied and treated children with anorectal anomalies ('imperforate anus') for many years. Now they present their opinions clearly and with full discussion of the alternative views on management. They make an impressive case for their methods. The book begins with a historical survey and goes on through embryological, anatomical, physiological, clinical, and radiological diagnostic and therapeutic aspects, to close with a thorough account of the results obtained.

The results show the great importance of differentiating infra- and supralelevator anomalies. The results of treating the former are excellent, but only 63% of the latter achieved a 'good' marking, even with the authors' puborectalis preserving procedure. Nevertheless, only 4% were frankly 'poor', and the value of long-term management and training after operation is evident.

The fallacies of the traditional upside down x-ray are shown, and the sophisticated radiological anatomical studies of the authors' colleague, Justun Kelly, form an invaluable section of the book.

The newly recommended international classification with its 33 varieties of 'imperforate anus' is used and is seen to be justified by the many variations in what used to be simply called 'imperforate anus'. This book should do much to prevent the lifelong tragedies of incontinence which followed such appalling procedures as 'cruciate incision and exploration of the hollow of the sacrum', and regrettably sometimes still do.

Congenital Malformations. Notes and Comments. By JOSEF WARKANY. (Pp. xl + 1309; illustrated + tables. £31.60.) Chicago: Yearbook Medical Publishers; London: Lloyd-Luke. 1972.

This is an astonishing book, if only as to size. With its 1300 closely printed pages it is comparable dimensionally to the standard textbooks encompassing the whole of paediatrics such as 'Nelson', yet all the work of a single author. In the 1950s Warkany's pioneering work first directed paediatricians to the need for them to

devote the same kind of systematic study to congenital defects and their causation as had earlier led to such rich dividends in the case of infective and metabolic disorders.

In the subsequent years three landmarks in the subject were to appear, the recognition of rubella embryopathy, thalidomide embryopathy, and chromosomal defects. In turn each led to hopes that maternal infections, or toxic drugs, or chromosomal defects would be found to account for an important number of major fetal defects. In the event, only a small proportion proved to be so caused, and the cause of the vast majority of cases remains unknown. For this reason, a book on congenital defects might become little more than a catalogued series of descriptions, and to some extent this is true here, as the author himself admits. But here the information has been garnered from such wide sources and has been collated and presented so attractively as to disarm such a criticism.

Take, for instance and at random, the confused and confusing matter of arthrogyposis; this occupies a section of 4½ pages with 44 references and tells us just what is known about this subject. The busy clinician faced with a case is thus admirably equipped to answer the questions he and the parents will want answered (What is the pathology? What lesions is it likely to be associated with? What are the chances of further offspring being affected?), while if he requires to go into the subject in more depth he has the references to guide him. The reviewer has dipped into this rich book to see how Warkany has handled a score of other subjects, and has met with few disappointments, though it was surprising to be unable to find any reference to the subject of limb constriction rings.

Numerous photographs, pedigrees, and diagrams illustrate the text, and animal analogues are used to give point to the text wherever such experimental work seems to be germane.

Present and future generations of paediatricians will bless Warkany for having produced so splendid a book.

Infantile Autism: Concepts, Characteristics and Treatment. IRMR Study Group No. 1 held at the Ciba Foundation, London, 15-17 June 1970, under the auspices of the Institute for Research into Mental Retardation. Edited by MICHAEL RUTTER. (Pp. xi + 328; illustrated + tables. £3.50.) Edinburgh and London: Churchill Livingstone. 1971.

This is probably the most important publication, and certainly one of the most stimulating, dealing with this subject to date. The study group members (listed at the end) have all been actively involved in clinical work concerning autistic children. The contributors approach this central problem from different angles. What is encouraging is to discern both clarification and, if not agreement, at least a most significant selectivity, which is now enabling researchers to narrow down their areas of work. The range is still wide, but this book helps to bring together such agreements as are

possible. All of it is useful, readable, not too technical, and consists of 15 papers, together with introductions and discussions following. The chapters cover classification; perception and social responses; language, divided into experimental, comparative, and clinical approaches; followed by approaches to treatment in behavioural therapy; work with parents; and educational and speech therapy with the child.

A key article, with the title *Autism a central disorder of cognition and language?*, is that by the editor Michael Rutter and his colleagues Lawrence Bartak and Steven Newman; it gives as clear a description as is currently possible of the diagnosis in terms of 'what autism is not' and 'what autism might be'. It discusses possible factors, for example genetic, and rules out others seen as no longer central to this diagnosis; it supplies valuable new material in regard to outcome and provides factual evidence concerning such components as intellectual retardation and brain damage whether inborn or progressive. It leaves the emphasis on the essential factor of 'the presence of a severe and extensive defect in language comprehension and in central functions associated . . . with the processing of symbolic or sequenced information'. Following this is a more detailed study of perceptual and language development in autistic children by Lorna Wing.

The succeeding sections on therapy include an interesting account of the help that parents can give when they are carefully involved through professional help in working with their own children. Other papers include modifications of behaviour therapy, speech and language therapy, and more direct educational work in school units devised for autistic children. The book is without question of great value to paediatricians, since they are often the first to be consulted when a child begins so early in life to show an unusual developmental deviation. One of the most valuable derives from Kolvin working at a unit in a children's hospital; and it is a paediatrician, Rendle-Short, who ends his contribution by pointing out that the paediatrician and the general practitioner play a vital role in making the early diagnosis.

Comprehensive Management of Epilepsy in Infancy, Childhood and Adolescence. By SAMUEL LIVINGSTON. (Pp. xiii + 657; 41 figures + 32 tables. U.S. \$27.50.) Springfield, Illinois: C. C. Thomas. 1972.

This book is exactly what its title claims—a comprehensive guide to all aspects of the management of epilepsy in childhood. The author has been director of the Johns Hopkins Hospital Epilepsy Clinic for 26 years, and he writes from immense personal experience, as well as from an encyclopaedic knowledge of the literature. The book is admirably written, always clear, and every statement is thoroughly well documented. Though the subject is primarily management, there is a long chapter on the classification of epilepsy used by the author, so the reader is left in no doubt as to precisely what the author means by a particular term. Another early chapter deals with 'Disorders simulating epilepsy',

i.e. febrile convulsions and breath holding. There are over 200 pages on anticonvulsants—their pharmacologies, uses, and side effects—again with copious references. The ketogenic diet receives a full and detailed chapter: though difficult to administer, Dr. Livingston has found it effective in many cases that have been refractory to drug treatment.

Psychiatric aspects, education, employment, legal aspects, and driving are all dealt with, though these chapters are not as fully applicable on this side of the Atlantic as the earlier chapters.

This is a superb book, of which I read every word with enjoyment and admiration. Convulsive disorders seem to confuse many paediatricians. Dr. Livingston's book could do much to make things clearer, as well as being an invaluable reference work. I can think of few questions I have been asked by parents, students, or colleagues that are not dealt with.

Since it is surely destined to become a classic, some minor improvements could be suggested for the second edition. It is somewhat confusing to have two chapters, one by the author and one by Dr. Deitrich Blumer, on psychiatric aspects of epilepsy, particularly as each presents opposite views of the incidence of psychiatric disturbance in temporal lobe epilepsy. Dr. Blumer gives the conventional view that such disturbances are very common: Dr. Livingston has found them no commoner in psychomotor than in other forms of epilepsy.

The book seems in general to run out of steam in its last third. The last chapter but one, on 'Prognosis for the child with epilepsy today' seems remarkably feeble compared with earlier chapters: indeed it contains much less information on prognosis than several of the earlier chapters. It is as though the author had become weary of the massive compilation of facts which he uses so effectively earlier on.

This book is strongly recommended for every paediatric department's library.

The Handicapped Child, Research Review Volume II. Studies in Child Development. By ROSEMARY DINNAGE. (Pp. xi + 451. £5.50.) London: Longman. 1972.

This book follows the same pattern as Mrs. Dinnage's highly successful Research Review Volume I which dealt with cerebral palsy, 'minimal cerebral dysfunction', and epilepsy. The present volume covers disorders of vision, hearing, and speech, with briefer sections on some other chronic physical handicaps. The first section is a superbly lucid 'Review of Research'. Next are abstracts of 81 completed and published research projects in this field, averaging nearly 3 pages each, and therefore long enough to be really informative. An annotated bibliography of 627 further publications follows; here the comments are much shorter, but pithy enough to tell the reader whether this book or paper should be pursued further. Finally there is an annotated list of 44 ongoing research projects, 32 British and 12 American. (One of the very few criticisms one can