

BOOK REVIEWS.

OPERATIVE MIDWIFERY. By J. M. MUNRO KERR, C.B., C.M.,
Glas., Fellow of the Faculty of Physicians and Surgeons,
Glasgow; Obstetric Physician, Glasgow Maternity Hospital.
With 294 illustrations in the text. 8vo, pp. 705. New York,
William Wood & Co., 1908.

Since the modern operations of Cæsarean section, vaginal hysterectomy, pubiotomy, symphysiotomy, and abdominal section for extra-uterine pregnancy, tumors, and similar intra-abdominal complications of pregnancy have been evolved and are so often performed in suitable cases by all well-prepared obstetricians, obstetrics has become essentially a part of surgery and the accoucheur to be successful requires a thorough surgical training.

Many years have elapsed since a treatise devoted entirely to operative midwifery has appeared in the English language. The recent volume by Kerr supplies such a want. The work is devoted entirely to the consideration of the indications of the various operative procedures now practiced in obstetrics, and a detailed description is given of the technic of operation involved in each.

Fully one-half of the volume is devoted to the subject of dystocia, and in the subdivisions of this general subject separate chapters are devoted to the consideration of the various conditions giving rise to difficult labor. The causes inherent in the forces of labor, in the birth canal or in the child itself, are systematically considered, and the different abnormalities of presentation, malformation of the child or pathologic changes in the maternal organs are clearly described and, so far as it is possible to do so, are illustrated by excellent plates, many of them made directly from material in the possession of the author.

The obstetric operations—version, forceps, symphysiotomy, accouchement forcé, vaginal Cæsarean section, and the different operations involving destruction of the child—are described in detail in separate chapters. Such pathologic conditions as moles, extra-uterine pregnancy, placenta previa, and the various varieties of hemorrhage form another group of interesting chapters, and,

finally, the various accidents occurring to either mother or child at the time of birth are carefully considered.

Few medical men are called upon to conduct a case of labor in which the product consists of a double monster, and even obstetricians of considerable experience will see in a life-time but two or three confinements so complicated; nevertheless, a practitioner may any day find himself face to face with such an obstetrical emergency, and it is therefore necessary for him to know what has been the usual history of such cases and in what way the difficulty in delivery can best be overcome. The chapter devoted to double monsters has been written by J. W. Ballantyne of Edinburgh, and is an excellent summary of our knowledge of this unusual condition.

One of the most important chapters in the book is devoted to the diagnosis of presentation by means of abdominal manipulations, and as this subject has been imperfectly considered in medical literature, the directions given are of unusual practical value.

As a literary contribution, the book is well worth reading, and the judicial manner in which the author marshals his facts and conclusions gives more than ordinary force to his teaching. He is eminently conservative. "A first labor is a trial labor; so with moderate pelvic deformity it is well to have recourse to any major operation only if nature fails after she has been given a long trial." This sentence may be taken as the text upon which the book is developed, and it would be well if all men called to attend women in labor would adopt the same conservative attitude. Few books that have appeared in medicine can be read with more pleasure and profit. The illustrations are new and excellent, and altogether the volume forms one of the most important additions to the literature of obstetrics that has ever appeared.

HENRY P. DE FOREST.

MANUAL OF OPERATIVE SURGERY. By JOHN FAIRBAIRN BINNIE, A.M., C.M., Professor of Surgery in the Kansas State University, etc. Fourth edition. Volume I. Philadelphia, P. Blakiston, Son & Co., 1909.

This book of Dr. Binnie's is rapidly outgrowing the limits which it set for itself at the beginning. In this fourth edition it has become a two-volume work, and this first volume considerably exceeds in its number of pages the entire original work,