

and great vessels nothing is said of the *ductus arteriosus*; nor is the fœtal circulation in man described with a view of aiding the student in comprehending the heart having a mixed blood.

We may take exception to the assertion that the dental arch is interrupted in all living mammals below man excepting the lemur *Tarsius*; some of the bats having the same peculiarity. Nor can we accept the use of the word "beast" to small mammals—as when he speaks of apes and "other beasts as the hedge-hog." He appears to apply the term to all the mammals—seeking, perhaps, in the vernacular for a word expressing a milk-yielding quadruped. We believe that most readers would prefer its application to those animals used by man for "food, labour, or support." The use of the term "Ape" is also here seen in a decidedly exceptional way—for, instead of restricting it to the old world forms, it is given to the new world as well.

The attempt to write for two distinct classes of readers may explain some of these features of the volume. It is not for us to reflect upon the accuracy of the author's judgment other than to remark that an omission of the anatomy of the organs of generation, while fitting the volume for the academy, materially impairs its usefulness to the medical man. But so far as it goes the latter will find in it a mass of information relative to the structure of animals not to be found in any other volume, and presented in a pleasing form.

H. A.

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AST. XXXVII.—*Surgical Diseases of Infants and Children*. By M. P. GUERSANT, Hon. Surgeon of the Hôpital des Enfants Malades, Paris. Translated from the French by RICHARD J. DUNOLISON, M.D. 8vo. pp. 354. Philadelphia: Henry C. Lea, 1873.

THIS work is familiar to many readers of the Journal, having been published in the *Medical News and Library*, so that, as its character is pretty fully known, we shall call attention to only a few of the points which have struck us upon a perusal of it.

M. Guersant disclaims any intention of writing a comprehensive treatise upon infantile surgery, his sole object having been to embrace within the pages of his book those affections incident to childhood, which he has met with sufficiently often to have made them the subject of special study, and to pronounce opinions based upon the results of his own observation. That these opinions are worthy of careful consideration will be evident when we remember that for twenty years their author enjoyed the advantage of the practice of the Hôpital des Enfants Malades; yet, whoever disregards the great mass of the current literature upon the subject of which he treats will assuredly do as M. Guersant has done, write a book in many points behind the age in which he lives.

He advises, except in those cases of imperforate natural openings which brook no delay, to postpone operating upon children until they are at least two or three weeks old; by so doing, he thinks, more satisfactory results will be reached than where an operation is done immediately after birth. By waiting a short time an opportunity is given to vaccinate the child, and individual peculiarities may be learned, while we shall be spared the mortification of seeing the operation marred by an unexpected outbreak of inherited syphilis or an attack of variola.

The subject of fractures occupies fifteen pages, being discussed in an exceedingly general manner; indeed, we think too little space is devoted to it, while the style is vague and indefinite. For instance, separation of the coronoid process of the ulna is spoken of as if it occurred with about the same frequency as any other fracture in the neighbourhood of the elbow, whereas its existence is doubted by some, and its extreme rarity admitted by all. We ourselves think that we once saw a case, and our judgment was backed by good authority, but we have never seen a second. One case of ununited fracture is narrated, which occurred in the case of a little girl, whose age is not given, in which, after a full trial of the most highly vaunted methods to procure consolidation, amputation was resorted to at the expiration of some years. M. Guersant recommends an early application of apparatus after fracture, but he has not heard of extension by a weight in fractures of the thigh-bone. The immovable dressings, so much in vogue of late, receive no commendation, and the general line of practice is somewhat antiquated. In cases requiring amputation a primary operation is earnestly advocated.

M. Guersant has performed lithotomy one hundred times. He adopts the bi-lateral method, and advises that, when it is necessary, the wound should be plugged with ngaric and a flexible catheter rather than with Dupuytren's cannula. Although our author speaks with pride of the virile powers of some of his old stone cases as evidence that the spermatic ducts were not involved in his incisions, he refers to three cases in which the rectum was wounded. The exceptionally high mortality is accounted for when we learn that he lost eight cases from cramp. Forty cases of lithotomy are referred to, of which four occurred to intercurrent affections, and three died from the operation, showing what is now pretty fully established, that this proceeding has its best field among adults.

In simple hare-lip M. G. states, that we may operate in the first month, but in complicated cases, or where the bones are deficient, we are advised to delay much longer. The view taken of Littré's or Amassat's operation for imperforate anus is a discouraging one, as, in our author's opinion, the disgusting deformity which follows a successful operation is but little better than death. We are struck by the honesty with which M. Goersant tells of the mistakes he has made, mentioning a case where he excised an ovary which made its appearance in the left labium, having mistaken it for a cyst—while further on he tells us that he ligatured, with fatal result, an encephalocele which protruded through the temporo-ethmoidal suture, it having been mistaken by his colleagues and himself for an erectile tumour. We regret to find all operations upon exstrophied bladder condemned as useless, thus ignoring the labours of Mr. Wood and others. For the removal of subcutaneous tumours in general, the use of Viennese paste, or some other form of caustic, is advised, as less likely to be followed by erysipelas than when excision is resorted to.

One of the most striking peculiarities this book presents is its resemblance to a mosaic, there being no attempt to follow any method of classification. To one who has Holmes to refer to for special directions, the volume is valuable as containing the views of its distinguished author and of the French school, but it is less suitable as a vade mecum for students.

We always enjoy books such as this, which are given to the profession as the result of a life's labour and observation, but there is a melancholy interest attached to this volume in particular from the fact that its distinguished author is one of that army of martyrs whose lives have been sacrificed in the discharge of duty—M. Goersant having recently died of syphilitic disease, received by inoculation from a patient.

S. A.