mental development, and survival; dysmorphic features are only briefly mentioned. A large number of minor syndromes are thus delineated. However, within major syndromes there is little or no subdivision of the text so that specific information is not readily retrieved. Furthermore, the author departs with little justification from ISCN (1978), and the clinical illustrations might be more conveniently located interspersed within the text than in a group at the end of each chromosome section. On the other hand, published reports up to 1982 appear to be thoroughly and critically reviewed, with the more recent important references listed for each aberration, while the latest reports are included as addenda. The references are completed by a first author index.

The field of clinical cytogenetics, after the technical advances of the last 15 years, has seen an almost bewildering increase in the number and variety of published cases with imbalances resulting from loss or gain or both of parts of chromosomes. It has reached the stage where the need to review and catalogue comprehensively has become acute. This volume, which will require regular updating, makes a very significant contribution to that process and is likely to become an indispensable acquisition for cytogenetic laboratories and clinicians with an interest in cytogenetics. However, there are some deficiencies in its organisation and presentation that might usefully be corrected in a future edition.

S H ROBERTS

Clinical Atlas of Human Chromosomes

2nd edition. By Jean de Grouchy and Catherine Turleau. (Pp xx + 487; figures + tables.) Chichester: John Wiley. 1984.

The first edition of this useful book was published in 1977 and contained 319 pages. The second edition, in similar format, is 487 pages long. Not only is there more information on all conditions, but more than 30 chromosomal syndromes—collections of cases with duplication or deletions of chromosome segments with recognisable clinical similarity—are described.

The authors take one through the human karyotype, chromosome by chromosome, and arm by arm. They document the morphology of each chromosome, normal genes located on it, and described abnormalities with their clinical correlates. The clinical illustrations, perforce largely reproduced from previous original publications, are sometimes less than excellent, but are adequate for their purpose.

In place of a conventional index, the book

contains a 'syndrome finder', a list of major clinical features, leading one to the chromosomal disorders in which the clinical sign occurs. I failed to find the Prader-Willi syndrome (or chromosome 15) mentioned under hypotonia, obesity, or genital anomalies, but the system in general seems to work well. I would personally have welcomed some way in which named syndromes could be located by their eponyms, rather than by their individual clinical components.

Although dated 1984, I suspect that this is a translation of the French edition, which is a little older. Perhaps for this reason, the Langer-Giedion syndrome, associated with abnormalities of 8q, appears in the foreword, but not in the text.

These are, however, minor blemishes in what is generally a thoroughly useful book. As the range of detectable chromosomal abnormalities increases, and particularly with the advent of prometaphase chromosome analysis, it becomes less and less satisfactory simply to give the laboratory a blood sample labelled 'abnormal' and assume that they will inevitably find whatever is wrong. With long chromosomes, directed attention will efficiently lead the person at the microscope to confirm or exclude particular abnormalities, and I would guess that this will become increasingly true over the coming years. The authors hope that this current edition will have a long and happy life; I think that we may all be crying out for a third edition sooner than they expect, as we continue to explore the world of single band deletions.

Cytogenetics laboratories have a need to compare the clinical information on a patient with previous descriptions of the same abnormality as a check on their cytogenetic diagnoses. Clinical geneticists need ready references to dysmorphic syndromes, to provide maximum prior information to the laboratories. Both groups will find this book excellent for their purposes.

MARTIN BOBROW

Principles and Practice of Medical Genetics

Volumes 1 and 2. Edited by A E H Emery and D L Rimoin. (Pp 1502; figures + tables.) Edinburgh, London: Churchill Livingstone. 1983.

This book marks, as the editors say in their introduction, the coming of age of Medical Genetics as a speciality in its own right. The fact that it has been written at all shows how extensively the subject has developed over the past 20 years, and both editors and publisher deserve much credit for putting this major synthesis on the record.

In many ways this book complements another