likely increasingly common and severe are unlikely to be determined by simple hereditary mechanisms. For these reasons medical genetics is of interest to students and to most clinicians. Though some elementary principles are expounded, the text is devoted to the demonstration that medical genetics is making a major contribution to medicine by its recognition that genetic factors in disease are not only widespread but often brought out or masked by environmental factors, and that in consequence the management of disease is likely increasingly to depend on adjustment of individuals identifiable as being subject to special (genetically determined) risk. The manipulation of environmental factors in the control of genetic disease is of course no radical break with medical practice.


If not a tract for the times, this book is a welcome signpost of trends in medical genetics. The authors of the Congenital malformations of the hand and their surgical treatment are orthopaedic surgeons who recognize that the concentration of attention to traumatic lesions of the hand no longer reflects current problems, and that the congenital anomalies present specific surgical requirements. The first half of the book is devoted to an excellent introductory chapter on malformations in general and to their experimental production, and this is followed by a competent survey of the commoner congenital and hereditary anomalies of the fingers and hand. There is also a useful tabulation of the syndromes in which hand defects occur. In all this, no new ground is broken, but the second half of the book with its stress on the poor viability of malformed tissue and the need for minimal surgical trauma is not operations is a thoughtful contribution, of value to the geneticist and still more to the surgeon to whom it is directed.


Since Apert in 1906 and Crouzon in 1912 described the syndromes that now carry their names, a voluminous literature on multiple anomalies has developed which has drawn not only on fresh observations but also on records in the older literature. Many of these observations show a consistent pattern, but a number fall into any pattern. While overlaps and formes frustes do occur, the classification of these defects presents considerable difficulties both clinically and pathologically. These difficulties are not helped by a mass of eponymous designations of doubtful validity.

The greater part of the monograph by Tridon and Thiriet is devoted to the clinical aspects of the syndromes covered by their review, and presents a welcome clarification of a confused literature. The opening section deals with the cranio-facial anomalies. These are discussed under four major headings: anomalies of the cranium, the cranio-facial skeleton, the facial skeleton, and cranio-cleido dysostosis. The authors rightly regard many of the anomalous cases as variants of a relatively few well-established entities and so help to bring some order in an apparently disorderly mass. A second section deals with the eye: this is particularly lucid, the literature being discussed under five headings: anophthalmos, coloboma, retinal anomalies, cataract, and neuromuscular defects. A concluding section deals with encephalopathies and is mainly devoted to Down's syndrome. The clinical part of the monograph is supported by some 350 references and these, though far from complete, are adequate.

In addition to these clinical discussions, there are chapters on the embryology of the extremities and on experimental and clinical teratology. The genetic implications are indicated throughout the text. The over-riding conclusion that there is no embryological basis for the association of anomalies of hands and feet with those of the head does not of course break new ground.