

Book Reviews.

Clinical Observations on Two Thousand Obstetric Cases. By G. PORTER MATHEW, M.D. (Cantab.), etc., Later Scholar of Trinity Hall, Cambridge, and University Scholar, St. Mary's Hospital. Price two shillings. London: Simpkin, Marshall, Hamilton, Kent & Co., Limited: Whitehead, Morris & Co., Limited.

This unpretentious little book is, from a practical and clinical point of view, one of the most interesting contributions to obstetrical literature that I have seen. Dr. Mathew must have expended much patient labor on his analysis, although he does not claim that it is quite complete. His tables giving statistics are well arranged and very interesting. The best feature in the report is his description of different methods of practice under varied circumstances. I think I have seen nothing so good in so few words, although I don't happen to agree with the author in all respects.

After a few remarks on the diagnosis of the onset of labor he comments on the mechanism of labor. He correctly states, as was first clearly demonstrated (I think) by Berry Hart, that the usual statement, that in occipito-anterior cases the head is born by a movement of extension, ought to be qualified, as he has found "by examination per rectum that the chin does not leave the sternum until the major diameter of the head passes the vulval outlet." In occipito-posterior cases he rotates to the front, and claims he is always successful, the secret being that he rotates early. From the author's point of view many others (including myself) have been very unsuccessful in this respect.

In a large proportion of breech cases he performed external cephalic version before or early in labor. He strongly favors the use of axis-traction forceps in properly selected cases, and does not agree with Prof. Jabb Sinclair, the President of the Section in Obstetrics at the Montreal meeting, that such procedure in fairly skilled hands is frequently followed by bad results. He agrees with Milne-Murray that in flat pelvis version has no advantage over axis-traction forceps properly applied. His remarks on the causes and treatment of puerperal septicemia are exceedingly apt. He describes two forms: 1. Sæpemia, or saprophytic toxemia; 2. Septic toxemia. The chief virtue of such classification is its simplicity, while it tends to prevent confusion about sæpemia. His rules as to treatment are to my mind the best I have seen in print. The only complaint I have to make is that I think Dr. Mathew should have written a bigger book.