find the book to be well referenced with references up to 1988 appearing in many chapters.

Most topics in paediatric dermatology are considered, and these include genodermatoses, blistering disorders, infections and infestations, tumours, hair and nails, atopic dermatitis, psoriasis, and cutaneous manifestations of paediatric disease.

Some minor criticisms. I would have expected more on neonatal cold injury, mention of actinic prurigo, hydroa vacciniforme, and tetracycline staining of teeth. Who still uses resorcinol in acne? The importance of clinical differentiation of the benign Buschke-Ollen-dorff syndrome from pseudoxanthoma elasti-cum should have been emphasised and recent work by Pope *et al* on Ehlers-Danlos syn-drome type IV merited mention. I would not agree that Crohn's disease is rare in adolescence or that involvement of the dorsum of the toes is a characteristic of juvenile plantar dermatosis. The editors could have been more thorough at reducing some repetition of the same disorders by different authors.

The index is good and comprehensive and I found no spelling errors in it. Illustrations are all monochrome and a minority which have reproduced poorly should have been omitted. I assume that colour illustrations would have resulted in a more prohibitive cost.

In 1988 a larger two volume *Paediatric Dermatology* text appeared (Schachner and Hansen) which has been well received. I think this one volume tome at half the cost bears favourable comparison.

I recommend that dermatology and paediatric departments purchase this very readable reference book. Unfortunately the price is too high for many individual doctors to buy a copy for themselves.

J VERBOV
*Consultant paediatric
dermatologist*

Dewhurst's Practical Paediatric and Adolescent Gynaecology. Second Edition. By D Keith Edmonds. (Pp 148; £40.00, hardback.) Butterworth Scientific Limited, 1989. ISBN 0-407-01520-5.

Sir John Dewhurst established a unique understanding and experience in the very specialised field of paediatric and adolescent gynaecology which is nationally and internationally renowned. This is acknowledged in the altered title of this second edition of his classic book, which has been revised and updated by his 'apprentice' Keith Edmonds.

The adjective 'practical' is justifiably chosen, and the book provides a complete catalogue of detailed and thorough advice on the clinical features, aetiology, investigation, and treatment of all gynaecological problems of childhood, from ambiguous genitalia at birth to pregnancies in adolescents. Each chapter includes a careful list of references to relevant detailed studies and reviews.

This book provides an essential reference work for first line management of what are such important and yet uncommon conditions in the experience of most gynaecologists, and where erroneous initial treatment can have such unfortunate long term results. The advice on appropriate emotional care and understanding of the young patient and her parents is particularly helpful.

The book is written from the gynaecological point of view and essentially concentrates on the gynaecological aspects of these problems. Nevertheless it must be essential reading for paediatricians, and an important reference work for general practitioners.

The one disappointment is the surprisingly brief treatment of the problems of suspected or actual child sexual abuse. The author describes the conditions of vaginal discharge and vulvitis as being 'probably the only gynaecological disorders of childhood which may be thought of as common', but those of sexual abuse are becoming almost equally so (although the referral pattern may well be, rightly or wrongly, biased by the gender of the doctor!).

S TUCK
Consultant gynaecologist

Yearbook of Pediatrics 1989. By Oski Stockman. (Pp 683; £40.00, hardback.) Wolfe Medical Publications Ltd, 1989. ISBN 0-8151-6561-7.

Another year must have passed. I'm a year older (a bad thing) and another edition of the Yearbook has arrived (a good thing). We have both put on weight. The Yearbook has expanded from 550 to 670 pages and I've (well that's a secret).

It's hard to say anything new about the Yearbook, which is an old friend, and this edition maintains the high standard of previous years. The whole range of paediatrics is covered by original articles, and most are followed by fairly long editorial comment, always erudite and humane, and often funny. The usual helpful list of review articles is included.

How could the Yearbook be improved? Some years ago the American Academy of Pediatrics published a review of the Doman-Delacato programme, and pointed out that there was no objective evidence at all that this very expensive and arduous treatment benefited handicapped children. I wonder if the editors would consider commissioning occasional similar special articles on controversial subjects which would then have the authority of the Yearbook behind them? Subjects that could be considered include subclinical copper deficiency as a cause of fractures, hair analysis as a diagnostic test, the role of oxygen in the retinopathy of prematurity, and so on.

I do have one criticism. Very few papers from outside the United States are mentioned. Of 49 papers on oncology, haematology, and urinary tract, 36 are from America and none from the United Kingdom. Is no research carried out in this country, or should the editors widen their horizon?

The Yearbook is essential reading for any paediatricians who want to keep up to date, and I strongly recommend it.

M MONCRIEFF
Consultant paediatrician

Molecular Medicine: Cystic Fibrosis. By Peter Goodfellow. (Pp 96; £15 paperback.) Oxford University Press, 1989. ISBN 0-19-261835-0.

When I was invited to review this book I seriously considered declining as molecular medicine is not one of the strings of my bow. However, I thought, as this was the case at least if I read the book I might learn something. Few clinicians who have left medical school for longer than 10 years have more than a basic understanding of cellular chemistry let alone molecular biology. Most paediatricians, however, have some understanding of the clinical disorder of cystic fibrosis. One of the purposes of this review was to discover if this book would enlighten we clinicians who are so sadly ignorant about the basic sciences on the recent advances in the understanding of the

cellular defects in subjects with cystic fibrosis and the identification and location of the cystic fibrosis gene.

There are five chapters. Three cover the natural history, management, and prenatal diagnosis of cystic fibrosis and present a well written synopsis of the subject, accessible not only to non-medical research workers but also to lay readers. The other two describe the defects in epithelial ion transport and molecular genetics of cystic fibrosis. For the average clinician these chapters are undoubtedly difficult. However, those working in the subject at the interface of clinical and laboratory science will find them comprehensive, up to date and well referenced. It is for this latter group that I think this book will be most useful.

Sir Peter Medawar, in answer to criticism that too much scientific specialisation meant that scientists could no longer communicate with each other, said that 'scientists are getting less specialised not more'—physicists and chemists have entered the world of biology—and 'the reason [they] seem so seldom to communicate with each other is that they do not really want to . . . they want above all to be left to cultivate their gardens'. Certainly this book illustrates very well how the varied contributions of chemists, molecular biologists, clinical scientists, and others make for the understanding of 'that shapely whole' and while each may not understand how the other cultivates his garden at least we may all obtain a concept of how growth is proceeding.

S MCKENZIE
Consultant paediatrician

Handbook of Neurological Investigations in Children. By John B P Stephenson and Mary D King. (Pp 244; £25 paperback.) Butterworth Scientific Ltd, 1989. ISBN 0-7236-1295-1.

What a welcome book to the slightly dull world of paediatric neurology. The authors have tackled their subject with enthusiasm and have produced a very readable and thought provoking book. The very individual approach adopted towards investigation of children with neurological disorders has made the subject very tangible for general paediatricians.

The first section of the book is devoted to each individual test and every chapter ends with well illustrated case histories. A step wise approach to investigation is supported and shopping lists are definitely out! The philosophy of investigations, their benefits, and harmful effects are discussed sensibly. We are provided with an up to date account of the most appropriate investigations available in the late 1980s. The chapters on electroencephalography and diagnostic imaging are particularly good. Although the chapter on biochemistry looks daunting, it is very readable and gives a succinct account of the variety of tests available. The linking of biochemical tests to clinical information enables easier digestion of the information.

The second half of the book is devoted to a problem orientated approach to investigation. This works very well and compliments the first half of the book well. The authors cover a wide range of common topics—some rather too briefly.

Each chapter is well referenced and the 10 page index is comprehensive.

This book is essential reading for all paediatricians, especially those in training, and the odd paediatric neurologist might consult it. These authors are a successful team