Book reviews

Pediatric Surgery. Edited by T M Holder and K W Ashcraft. (Pp. 1166; illustrated + tables. £42.50 hardback.) Saunders: Philadelphia. 1980.

The editors have tried to compress into a single volume what 'most students, residents, pediatricians, and surgeons want to need to know about pediatric surgery'. To achieve this they have obtained the assistance of 85 contributors—three from Toronto, one from Melbourne, and the others from the USA—and so the orientation is limited by the American practice of paediatric surgery, although it contains more paediatric urology than one might expect. Somewhat unusual, but welcome, aspects in a surgical text are chapters on ethics, emotional aspects, and genetics: conditions such as neural tube defects, cleft lip and palate, limb anomalies, and osteitis are examples of conditions which are not discussed.

This book will appeal to the paediatric physician as well as to the surgeon because of the great experience and range of opinion recorded by the impressive team of collaborators. Although the useful lists of references at the end of each chapter are not comprehensive they provide a good basis for further reading.

There is the inevitable comparison with the two-volume *Paediatric surgery* edited by Benson *et al.* which has been described as 'the bible for paediatric surgeons', and has been a useful reference work for physicians requiring to know more about paediatric surgery; but this book is only likely to usurp that place if cost is a major consideration.

D G YOUNG

Practical Pediatric and Adolescent Gynecology. By Sir John Dewhurst. Vol. 1 of Reproductive Medicine Series. Series editors: E M Symonds and F P Zuspan. (Pp. 288; illustrated + tables. Sw.fr. 75 hardback.) Dekker: New York. 1980.

This book deals with the structural, gynaecological, and sexual problems of

young girls which present in paediatric, gynaecological, and endocrine clinics. All sections were written by Sir John Dewhurst except that on sexual activity of the adolescent which was written by G V P Chamberlain. Problems arising from infancy to adolescence are covered; the lucid and interesting text is based very much on the author's own experience, and there are many excellent illustrations. A short textbook such as this cannot deal in depth with the many subjects which include intersexuality (with a brief outline of sexual differentiation), congenital malformation, vulval infection, normal and abnormal puberty, breast lesions, genital tumours, and sexual activity. Each chapter is followed by a reasonably comprehensive bibliography and, at the very least, serves as a good introduction to the subject.

I recommend this as a very useful book for general paediatricians and paediatric endocrinologists.

L STIMMLER

Rheumatic Disorders in Childhood. By B M Ansell. Postgraduate Paediatrics Series. Series Editor J Apley. (Pp. 299; illustrated + tables. £25.00 hardback.) Butterworth: London. 1980.

There has long been a need for a comprehensive textbook on children's rheumatic diseases and Barbara Ansell has now produced an excellent book to fill this gap. She has drawn on her extensive experience at the Canadian Red Cross Memorial Hospital, Taplow, where she has worked for 30 years, and her knowledge in this field must be unique.

The book starts with a chapter on general aches and pains and then proceeds via monarticular disorders to polyarthritis, especially juvenile chronic arthritis. This is followed by chapters on rheumatic fever, rarer connective tissue disorders, blood dyscrasias affecting the musculo-skeletal system, and two chapters on miscellaneous conditions including tumours, various dysplasias, and some metabolic diseases.

The chapters on polyarthritis are excellent. Juvenile chronic arthritis is classified according to the recommendations of the European League Against Rheumatism and the extensive differential diagnosis is described fully. Management of the disease is discussed in detail, with early references to the importance of emotional support for the child and the family. There is a lengthy section on the numerous drugs available, stressing both the benefits and complications of drug therapy, and helpful advice is given on prognosis although it is stressed that more prospective studies using the modern classification are required.

Although florid rheumatic fever is rare today in the UK Dr Ansell reminds us that this is still a common and serious disease in developing countries, and her description of the clinical features and management will certainly help paediatricians working in such areas.

The book is well produced with many illustrations both black and white and in colour; there are extensive references some as recent as 1980.

I enjoyed reading this book and learnt a great deal from it; I strongly recommend it.

M MONCRIEFF

Shorter notice

Infectious Diseases of Children, seventh edition. By S Krugman and S L Katz. (Pp. 607; illustrated + tables. £31.50 hardback.) Mosby: St Louis. 1981.

A reference book on infectious diseases is needed in every paediatric department, and many have been served well by previous editions of this excellent, well produced, and well illustrated monograph. A mine of information on the things one forgets (or never knew)—such as incubation times, rare complications, active and passive immunisation, infectivity, etc. This edition closely resembles previous ones but has some new chapters—for example infant botulism.