Most of the chapters on the section for the bladder describe specialist works including: reconstruction, diversion, augmentation, and substitution – procedures that should not be attempted by surgeons with occasional practice.

There are good descriptions on various techniques of orchidopexy with recognition of the use of laparoscopy for impalpable testes and orchidectomy.

The last section is on the penis and urethra and contains detailed descriptions for common procedures including circumcision, treatment of concealed and webbed penis, and the most popular methods of hypospadias repair. While the surgical techniques are described in detail I regret that there is scant discussion on the indications for a common procedure such as circumcision. There is plenty of evidence in this country that many unnecessary circumcisions are being performed. It is still not adequately recognised that failure to retract the foreskin in the first four years of life is not abnormal and that medical indication for circumcision in this age group is rare.

At £135 this textbook does not come cheap but overall it is an excellent book and will serve as an invaluable reference for any surgeon involved with the care of urological problems in children.

PAUL TAM

Clinical reader in paediatric surgery

Community Paediatrics. 2nd Ed. Edited by Leon Polnay and David Hull. (Pp 479; £35 paperback.) Churchill Livingstone, 1993. ISBN 0-443-04250-0.

All paediatricians need to keep up to date with community child health and some still need to discover its fascination. This is a field where thinking is developing rapidly and services are changing, but a historical perspective remains crucial. *Community Paediatrics* is currently the best basic text on the bookshelf covering the essential elements that all paediatricians in training need to know about. It offers an easy read to those broadly familiar with the contents already.

The format of the new revised edition provides a brief historical background followed by an account of the current provision of health, education, and social services. The section on benefits will date, but is still useful. The one on the law could be expanded to include a European perspective as we move ever closer.

The information section, supplemented by the later chapters and appendix, is useful, but more on information technology in child health could have been included. Examples of audits undertaken would stimulate interest and pointers to areas where further research is indicated would be a major asset.

The basics of growth, physical and emotional development are well covered. Perhaps accidents do not receive the depth of coverage they deserve considering their importance in child health, particularly after infancy, but the multidisciplinary and inter-agency aspects are clearly illustrated.

The section on child protection precedes the chapters on disability, which are excellent. Throughout the book key data, summaries, tables, and facts are highlighted in green. This attractive layout breaks up the text in a useful way.

There is a very good introduction to emotional and behavioural problems while

the section on genetics is essential but short. References are more than adequate for a basic text and generally up to date.

At present there is discussion about the syllabus for paediatricians in training. There is a need for clearer definition of the knowledge and skills needed at both basic and higher training levels. The examinations in paediatrics have included an increasing number of community topics, so the comprehensive revision undertaken to produce this second edition is both timely and very worthwhile. I strongly recommend it to paediatricians at all levels.

SHEILA SHRIBMAN

Consultant paediatrician and director of child health

Essential Paediatrics. 3rd Ed. Edited by David Hull and Derek I Johnston. (Pp 365; £21.51 paperback.) Churchill Livingstone, 1993. ISBN 0-443-04782-0.

The authors of the third edition of *Essential Paediatrics* claim that it is just that – 'The essential core of knowledge required by medical students during their clinical course'. As a whole this is exactly what it manages to achieve.

Written by Sir David Hull and Derek Johnston, in conjunction with 13 experts associated with Nottingham University who contribute on aspects of the many paediatric subspecialties, this textbook is both sufficiently comprehensive for finals, yet free from excessive detail. At first glance it is well laid out with important points clearly highlighted, either in diagrammatic form or in tables. The numerous illustrations are easy to memorise, constitute effective summaries, and provide welcome breaks in blocks of text, as does the use of colour type.

This latest edition is far more user friendly than its predecessors; boasting colour photographs, the authors have obviously woken up to the effectiveness of visual aids in keeping medical students awake. Similarly, colour is utilised throughout in drawing the reader's attention to salient sections of text. Many of the radiographs are accompanied by diagrammatic representations which aid interpretation, a necessity for most medical students.

The 21 chapters cover the main systems of the body as well as more specific topics such as growth, mental handicap, and behaviour. In particular there is a useful introductory chapter on 'the ill child and his doctor' explaining how to take a history, though more importantly how to cope with the awe inspiring task of examining a strange child for the first time, and deal with anxious parents too.

There is some material superfluous to an undergraduate medical course, especially the 'genes' chapter, which goes into far more detail than the average medical student needs or understands. In contrast, the chapter on emotions and behaviour, tucked away at the back, skims over some topics too briefly. A subject like sexual abuse and its consequences for children and adults is covered in eight lines, and although the bibliographies at the end of each chapter offer useful pointers for more detailed reading there isn't one on child protection.

An appendix contains an easy to find list of all the normal values that an undergraduate would ever need as well as an effective outline of the child health surveillance programme, a summary of the UK immunisation schedule, and a paediatric formulary.

From medical students' point of view, it updates an established and popular book that is already viewed as one of the best student paediatric texts on the market. Its readability is a strength, and with such tightly packed student schedules, it provides easily absorbed, succinct material yet manages to engender an enthusiasm for paediatrics.

KATIE BROCKLESBY
Medical student

Child and Adolescent Psychiatry: Modern Approaches. 3rd Ed. Edited by Michael Rutter, Eric Taylor, and Lionel Hersov. (Pp 1122; £69.50 hardback.) Blackwell Scientific Publications, 1994. ISBN 0-632-02822-X.

The publication of the first edition of *Child and Adolescent Psychiatry: Modern Approaches* in 1976 was a major landmark in the child psychiatry literature. Those were exciting times for specialists working in the field of child psychiatry. The time was indeed ripe for a new and different textbook of child psychiatry aimed at providing a comprehensive account of the current state of knowledge through the integration of research findings and the understanding that comes from clinical practice. The book became a bible for child psychiatrists in this country and internationally.

The just published third edition has been duly responsive to the considerable professional changes of the last two decades, and the increase in scientific work relevant to the practice of child and adolescent psychiatry. The book has been completely rewritten and new and fresh approaches to the subject reflected in the new chapters. They acknowledge the decreasing importance of theoretical approaches, psychodynamic and otherwise, and the increased influence of developmental psychopathology. A richer appreciation of the role of biological factors in the origin of psychological disorders becomes apparent and the relationship between child and adult disorders is similarly given considerable attention. The involvement of mental health professions in the consequences of child abuse had led to a chapter on this topic and there are also chapters on psychiatric involvement with infants, and the AIDS pandemic. The coverage of treatment issues has been increased: and the evidence from trials as a basis for therapists' actions is carefully reviewed.

For paediatricians who still think of child psychiatry as a purely clinical endeavour strongly influenced by psychological theories, the depth and range of the discussion on underlying scientific issues may be a revelation. Advances in the classification of psychiatric disorders provide interesting reflections on the nature of classification in medicine generally. Of particular interest to paediatricians should be the chapters on interviewing parents, children and families, on clinical neurophysiology, on genetic chromosomal and brain influences on childhood psychopathology. The effects of chronic adversities, of physical and emotional maltreatment, and of family breakdown are also relevant to the work of paediatricians, particularly community paediatricians.

Recently there has been an upsurge of interest in disorders such as post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, neuropsychiatric problems such as obsessive compulsive disorders and tics. These are fully described