

Book reviews

Medical Aspects of Home Hazards. Edited by ALASTAIR NELSON. (Pp. 107; 1 figure. 50p.) London: Medical Commission of Accident Prevention. 1973.

This small book is published by the Medical Commission on Accident Prevention under the aegis of its Home Safety Committee. There are 4 parts. The first is a general review including a chapter by an architect on particular hazards of the structure, design, and equipment of houses. The second section is the one of most direct interest to paediatricians. R. Mitchell gives an overall review, A. Wilkinson talks about burns and scalds, F. H. Robarts deals with fractures and soft tissue injury, and T. Oppé contributes an excellent chapter on 'The Injured Child—Accident or Abuse?'. The third part deals with injuries to the elderly, and the fourth part with factors common to all ages, e.g. the dangers of drugs and fluids (by H. Matthew), hazards in the garden, and risk of infection from pets in the home.

Each chapter is written by an expert in his own field and gives a straightforward review of the current situation with points relevant to the prevention of accidents. The whole book is admirably designed to draw the attention of doctors of all grades—family doctors, paediatricians, and others—to the problems presented by accidents in the home, and it will be particularly useful in the training of medical students, nurses, health visitors, ambulance drivers, and first-aid men.

The fact that it is useful to lay people as well as to doctors should not deter would-be purchasers: most doctors are woefully ignorant about accidents and accident prevention, and it is well worth paying 50 pence to benefit from the wisdom of such an experienced group of authors.

Developmental Nephrology. By WALLACE W. MCCRORY. (Pp. xii + 216; illustrated + tables. £4.50.) Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press; London: Oxford University Press. 1972.

Most of the important aspects of the developing kidney are reviewed from both anatomical and functional viewpoints. The relevance of these to the infant's growth and health are discussed. The subject is divided into 5 sections: embryology, intrauterine development, measurement of renal function, postnatal renal function, and cellular processes underlying kidney growth and development. Each section concludes with a helpful summary and a splendid list of references (up to 1970).

The illustrations are very good and include a generous selection of reconstructed microdissections from Jean Oliver's *Nephrons and Kidneys*. Despite the attractive

presentation and the illustrations, this 200 page book is not easy to read right through. The style is somewhat ponderous and it lacks a unifying message. It is really a reference book, and one which will be useful to many nephrologists and neonatologists.

Considering the number and quality of the illustrations the price is modest; presumably because the project was supported by the Commonwealth Fund which encourages the publication of 'significant scholarly books in medicine and health'. This book is a careful and comprehensive piece of work that the Fund has done well to sponsor.

Clinical Pediatric Oncology. Edited by WATARU W. SUTOW, TERESA J. VIETTI, and DONALD J. FERNBACH. (Pp. xii + 602; 216 illustrations + tables. £16.00.) St. Louis: Mosby; London: Kimpton. 1973.

This is an excellent, clear, and thorough account of childhood cancer based on the extensive personal experience of the 36 authors as well as on a thorough review of published cases. The first third of the book is concerned with principles—epidemiology, aetiology, and methods of treatment. The chapter on radiation therapy is one of the few which seems too technical for the nonexpert, but the 2 on chemotherapy and the currently available drugs are most valuable references. Lane's chapter on psychological support deals with some of the most difficult issues of all in a clear, concise, and understanding way which is of real practical help. The remaining chapters are concerned with individual types of cancer. Understandably, leukaemia is given the most extensive coverage, but every variety of neoplasm is discussed, including CNS tumours and histiocytosis.

This is a most impressive book, not only for the quality of the text but also for showing the remarkable advances in the treatment of childhood malignant disease in the last 10 years. These advances have been most dramatic in leukaemia, Hodgkin's disease, and Wilms's tumour, but progress has been made with several other neoplasms. Most of the advances have come not from the discovery of new drugs or treatments, but by dogged perseverance by groups of workers, like those who compiled this book, in conducting clinical trials on the most effective ways of applying treatments already available.

This book certainly deserves a place in the paediatric or postgraduate library. The most difficult question it will raise for the average paediatrician is whether he should treat the comparatively small number of children he sees with malignant disease himself, with the benefit of advice from an expert in a centre, or whether the child should go to a centre having extensive experience of childhood malignancy.