There is little reference to the immunological work in paediatric malignancy, and to the use of nuclear medicine and radiological techniques in diagnosis.

The overall impression of the book is one of optimism, and in this respect it is worthwhile reading for those who are not conversant with the present achievements and cure rates in this important field.


This book has been written by the staff of the Royal Children's Hospital in Melbourne. It is based on their experience of 1689 children with leukaemia or malignant tumours, who have been treated between 1950 and 1972, a period during which the outlook for children with many forms of malignant disease has improved enormously.

Although this is a multi-author book, and a relatively long one, skilful editing has eliminated the tedious repetition of the same facts in different chapters, which has been such an irritating feature of other similar books in recent years. However, the authors show how vital it is for both clinicians and pathologists to co-operate fully in the treatment of children with such potentially fatal conditions, if the best results are to be achieved for the child and its family.

Many of the malignant conditions of childhood, which in the past were inevitably fatal, can now be effectively treated, particularly if the disease is diagnosed early and managed correctly from the start. It has thus become increasingly important for all doctors, both in general practice and in hospital, who are involved in the care of children, to be aware of the existence of these rare conditions and of the need to obtain the best treatment as quickly as possible. The book contains a comprehensive and up-to-date account of the natural history and management of cancer in children. It should certainly be available in any department concerned with the treatment of children with malignant disease.

From the point-of-view of both the family doctor and the paediatrician, perhaps one of the most helpful chapters is that on 'Parents and Patients', which stresses the need for informed frankness on the part of the doctor, and also the importance of helping the whole family to cope with a very stressful situation, whether the child is eventually cured or not ("when treatment has failed, the care of the child in the final stages of the illness is at least as crucial as in any other stage").


This large, beautifully produced, and exceedingly expensive book is the latest of a number of new books which have been published on this subject in the last few years. Previously Frank Ford's classic monograph, based largely on his personal experience at Johns Hopkins, was the main reference source, and though it remains a superb account of many clinical disorders, it has drawbacks in practical use. It is disease-rather than problem-orientated, so it is not always helpful in discussing the diagnostic possibilities in particular clinical situations, and it has been overtaken by the rapid advances in understanding of neurometabolic disorders.

Swaiman and Wright's textbook, which has multiple authorship, overcomes the first of these problems by being written in 3 sections. The first 84 pages discuss history taking, examination, and diagnostic methods. The second section of nearly 200 pages discusses symptoms and signs of neurological disease and provides a problem-orientated approach to paediatric neurology. In this section, extensive tables provide useful checklists. The remaining 800 pages describe neurological diseases systematically. This sensible approach generally works well, though the placement of chapters is not always logical—thus mental retardation and disorders of speech and language come in the problem section, whereas seizure disorders and learning disabilities come in the disease section. Furthermore, it sometimes leads to disorder being described twice—for example cerebral gigantism has two separate brief descriptions which are not cross-referenced, and incidentally neither of which would be likely to help the clinician make this diagnosis for the first time.

The neurometabolic and degenerative diseases are given an excellent and (for the present) up-to-date description, and in these as in all other chapters the reference lists are huge with a high proportion of recent papers.

The production and lay-out are beautiful. There are two volumes, both of which contain the complete index. The illustrations and tables are of very high quality. It is a pity that the price of this superb book will be prohibitive to most private purchasers in this country.


The second edition of this textbook, published 4 years after the first, has been extensively revised in the light of recent knowledge and expanded accordingly. The three authors have taken care not to isolate gastroenterology from general paediatrics and have indeed maintained the theme of the first edition: to bridge the gap between general discussions of gastrointestinal problems in paediatric textbooks and the standard gastroenterology texts.

The book consists of 37 chapters and is organized into three sections. The first of these deals with common gastrointestinal symptoms and signs and is probably more useful for the doctor starting a career in paediatrics, though some of the points are worthy of repeated emphasis. The second section describes disease entities in a lucid and problem-orientated manner. Problems of the small and large bowel, liver and biliary system, and finally the pancreas, are dealt with comprehensively. Understanding of the normal function and