tables. U.S. $18·00.) Amsterdam: Excerpta Medica.

This monograph provides a good and up-to-date review of the literature on congenital urethral valves. Methods of diagnosis are well described and throughout the quality of the extensive illustrations and radiographic reproductions is superb. The pathogenesis of the condition is described and well illustrated. The second and major part of the book reviews the author's clinical experience of 201 boys diagnosed as having urethral valves; though interesting it is much less valuable than the preceding section. It is repetitive in the style of a thesis dissertation, with too much unnecessary detail for the critical clinician. The book could have been much shorter and easier to read if the information had been more carefully organized.

A more serious problem is raised by the observation that 58 of the boys presented with enuresis without other urological symptoms, none had infected urine, and most had normal renal function. 51 of these boys had normal intravenous urograms and the diagnosis was made on the micturating cystogram. It is likely that most paediatricians in the U.K. would not have investigated these enuretic boys and it seems that criteria for diagnosis of this condition vary in different countries. Urologists do not commonly see patients with renal failure and dilated upper tracts in whom valves have been missed in childhood, and therefore one suspects that the author may be overdiagnosing the condition.

The book is attractively bound and printed and will be read with interest by those involved in treating these boys; it is probably not a worthwhile purchase for general paediatricians.

'Very Get This Training But They Don't Really Know How You Feel.' By A. Mervyn Fox. (Pp. 66. £1·00) Horsham, Sussex: Action Research for the Crippled Child. 1975.

This publication comprises the edited transcripts of interviews with parents of nine different handicapped children. The interviews were part of a health and social service consumer research project carried out by the author in an attempt to ascertain (a) the attitudes of clients and patients towards professionals providing services for families with handicapped children, and (b) their attitudes towards the statutory and voluntary services themselves.

In shedding his professional role and using a non-directive approach, the author has sensitively and effectively brought to light the importance and need for all involved in the care of handicapped children to really listen to parents and to give them continued, careful, explanations, in terms they can understand, both of the child's condition and services available.

The parents' comments, perhaps alarmingly, show us that often members of the caring professions tend to hide too much behind their professional roles, minimizing the effectiveness of their help and causing confusion in the parents' perception of the objectives and areas of competence of the various professions involved. The parents tell us that they need someone who will listen and offer practical advice from an early stage following diagnosis—the professional identity of this person being of secondary importance. The interviews bring alive the personalities and attitudes of nine lots of parents and in addition to learning about their perceptions of the various helping professions and their satisfaction or otherwise with services provided, we are given considerable insight into the effects of a handicapped child on family life as a whole.

This short publication is valuable and informative reading for all team members involved in the care of handicapped children and may well lead us to examine our own roles and ways of improving our techniques. It also provides useful teaching material for students in the various 'caring' professions.


This is a valuable collection of review articles, though it hardly qualifies as a textbook. It has a place in the larger libraries, but is not likely to be of such value to paediatricians as the works of Carter, Emery, and McKusick.

The book provides lucid accounts of classical human cytogenetics, the formal basis of the mathematics associated with the 'heritability' argument, and a particularly valuable article by Rushton which studies, from practical experience, the errors of development. Much has been written in this field, but very little by authors with any practical experience of the pathology, and in consequence its inherent difficulty has been exaggerated by a very vague terminology. The price (£9·75) is unusual for a paperback. The production is up to the standard expected of Blackwells.