

Book review

Pediatric Urologic Surgery. Edited by H. B. Eckstein, R. Hohenfellner, and D. I. Williams. (Pp. 533; illustrated + tables. £66.25 hardback.) Holt-Saunders: Eastbourne.

This surely is one of the finest operative texts yet produced and it will remain for some decades the most comprehensive and authoritative guide for all those tempted to operate on the urological problems of children. The timing of the production of this beautifully produced book is excellent as it coincides appropriately with the retirement from active paediatric urological practice of the senior author, Innes Williams, who has done more than anyone for this subject. Furthermore, it is only in the last year or two that techniques of this rapidly expanding specialty have become standardised although where there are still considerable controversies, as, for

example with hypospadias, the book provides good coverage of many different techniques. Many operations such as penile lengthening and paediatric transplantation are not easily found elsewhere. Although the more complicated procedures in paediatric urology should not be performed by those who have not had adequate training in both urology and paediatric surgery, here at least is advice on how to perform safely virtually all operations one is likely to encounter.

The illustrations must be singled out for their excellence and it is pleasing to see the radiologists and anaesthetists writing as part of the team. Here is a book by internationally renowned experts that although expensive, as are all such good books, will be a prize possession for all those interested in this subject.

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Shorter notice

Major Mental Handicap: Methods and Costs of Prevention. Ciba Foundation Symposium 59 (new series). (Pp. 226; illustrated + tables. US \$23.00 hardback.) Excerpta Medica: Amsterdam.

A Ciba symposium held in London in November 1977 with contributions from USA, Canada, France, Sweden, W. Germany, Switzerland, Finland, besides the UK. The recent striking improvement in the infant mortality in France, thought to be a consequence of the active measures initiated by the government, provided no doubt a main impetus for the idea of 'cost-effectiveness' being applied to perinatal work. The final chapter by Chapalain of Paris describing French experiences in evaluating cost-benefit is thus particularly worth while.