knowledge within developmental paediatrics. This book can be recommended as a guide to comprehensive medical evaluation of handicaps at the present time.

GILLIAN BAIRD

Psychological Aspects of Childhood Cancer. Edited by J Kellerman. (Pp. 321; illustrated + tables. \$32.50 hardback.) Thomas: Springfield, Ill. 1980.

This book, written mainly by American psychologists, is a multi-author text comprising two main sections. The first one has 9 chapters grouped together under the title 'The impact of illness and treatment', and includes a review of the medical background and current outlook in childhood cancer, the problems of social reintegration, the effects on adolescent patients and siblings, and the psychological effects of isolation in laminar air flow rooms. There is a report on a very detailed study of different categories of behaviour in children thus isolated, and a review of current literature on the effects of prophylaxis of the CNS in leukaemia; the final chapter is written by a patient. This section embodies much common sense and practical advice which will serve the reader well.

The second section contains 10 chapters dealing with clinical approaches to the problems. The first describes the programme of psychosocial support at one of the larger paediatric oncology units in the USA which deals with about 125 new patients a year. The number of psychosocial staff allocated to this unit is about equivalent to the staff for all psychosocial work in most children's hospitals in the

UK with a new patient load of several thousands; therefore it is not possible to compare the two treatment philosophies. There is a chapter on the use of hypnosis in the management of nausea, vomiting, and fear of procedures. Also there are useful chapters on communication with families and patients, death and dying, and terminal care at home, as well as a very good review of parent and patient groups which stresses the importance of these being controlled by professionals.

Overall I do not find this book helpful because, apart from isolated chapters, there is little discussion on how to manage the many problems which are reported as anecdotal cases and which are common to the practice of every paediatric oncologist. The language is often difficult to understand, I do not know whether this is because it is the jargon of psychologists or just the difference between the English and American languages; words like 'personological', 'acculturated', and 'family cosmology' sent me running to the dictionary, but in vain. Social workers and the few psychologists in the UK who deal with such problems might find this book helpful and a good reference source; I am sure that in North America it has a place on the library shelves of paediatric oncology units.

P MORRIS JONES

Swenson's Pediatric Surgery, fourth edition. Edited by J G Raffensperger. (Pp. 957; illustrated + tables. £51.00 hardback.) Appleton-Century-Crofts: New York. 1980.

This is a most welcome new edition of a

much respected book which begins by emphasising the breadth of the specialty with chapters on emotional needs, vascular access, genetics, and many other non-operative topics. However, it makes no attempt to be comprehensive and so elective urology, cardiac surgery, and the management of spina bifida are not included.

Common paediatric surgical problems and gastroenterology are dealt with authoritatively and are of value for both established and training surgeons. Swenson has retained the authorship of the chapter on Hirschsprung's disease, but after an excellent review of his own clinical experience and operation, other procedures are dismissed in 3 short paragraphs. The sections on tumours and trauma vary in standard and there is only a brief discussion of neuroblastomas.

The black and white photographs are disappointing, and many of the line drawings have poor captions. In contrast, the x-ray films reproduce clearly and each chapter is well referenced.

The chief merit of this book is that the clinical experience of one large North American Children's hospital is brought together in an easy-to-read text. The British trained surgeon will disagree with many of the stated opinions, but will be stimulated to question his or her own practice. As well as being of value to paediatric surgeons and general surgeons with a major commitment to children, it is also relevant to neonatologists and paediatricians with an interest in gastroenterology.

DAVID DRAKE