Book reviews

Visual Disorders in the Handicapped Child. (Paediatric Habilitation Series, vol 5). By J L Goble. Pp 304: Sfr 127 hardback. Marcel Dekker, 1984.

The introduction to this book states that it is aimed at non-ophthalmologists, particularly physicians, paediatricians, and neurologists, but that it would also be of interest to teachers, therapists, and nurses working with visually impaired children. One third of the book is devoted to general considerations of the development and assessment of vision, and the effects of visual loss on development and the child's schooling, while the later sections include detailed discussions of ophthalmic conditions occurring in handicapped children.

This is a very readable book which despite its relative brevity covers the ground well and is up to date; with each chapter accompanied by a comprehensive list of references. In the later sections it has not always been possible to eliminate jargon completely, but nevertheless I feel that the conditions discussed and their management are handled with skill and clarity.

Inevitably there are minor typographical errors and in some chapters I would have placed a different emphasis on the material, for example, the STYCAR tests are dismissed in six lines. On the whole, however, Dr Goble has achieved his object and produced a book which I am very pleased to possess.

BARRY JONES

End Stage Renal Disease in Children. Edited by R N Fine and A B Gruskin. Pp 586: £60.00 hardback. W B Saunders, 1984.

One problem with the increasing trend to subspecialise in paediatrics is that it is difficult for the general paediatrician to keep up to date with recent developments. This is especially true of end stage renal failure because of its relative rarity and the special techniques of treatment involved. Or is it?

Richard Fine and Al Gruskin have edited this book with a formidable list of international contributors, many of whom are pioneers in the treatment of end stage renal failure of children. It is in four parts.

The first concerns dialysis techniques with helpful chapters ranging from practical advice about the treatment of infants and nursing regimens to theoretical mathematical models of dialysis efficiency. Haemodialysis and continued ambulatory peritoneal dialysis are reviewed extensively and there is a small section about haemoperfusion. Surprisingly, there is little about the techniques of haemofiltration, which is being used increasingly in Europe.

The second part of the book is concerned with the clinical manifestation of renal failure with contributions about the problems of nutrition, physical and sexual maturation, and the effects of uraemia on other organs.

Renal transplantation is covered in the third part which includes a chapter on immunology as well as other practical aspects of transplantation.

In a book about modern technological achievements it is good to see the final part devoted to psychosocial aspects, including a small section on the care of the terminally ill child which will be of interest to all who are concerned with the management of children with end stage renal failure.

A general paediatrician having read this book would be abreast with current trends in the treatment of end stage renal failure but it is more likely to be used by him as a reference book. The paediatric nephrologist will find it a valuable addition to his bookshelf.

J T BROCKLEBANK

An Introduction to Recombinant DNA. By A E H Emery. Pp 223: £6.75 paperback. John Wiley and Sons, 1984.

Despite the spate of review articles and books on the 'new technology' of DNA manipulation, further offerings continue to appear. The stage has been reached where new books on the topic have to be exceptional to justify publication. Fortunately, Professor Emery's book fulfils such a description. Geneticists and paediatricians will know that he is the author or editor of many clear, well aimed, and successful books (although the suggestion on page 178, that his *Elements of medical genetics* has reached the 46th edition must be wish fulfilment).

His new book is not a text book, and unusual in several respects. Firstly, it is well organised, well illustrated, and covers a great deal of ground. Secondly, it is extremely up to date (although to say that the fragile site at Xq27 has already been cloned (Table 6.1, p 106) is pushing it a bit) and lastly it is very readable. While it might not be true to say that 'I couldn't put it down', I can say that 'I couldn't help picking it up again'. Surprisingly, serious attempts at denaturation, by inadvertent immersion of the book in cocoa or a hot bath late at night failed, thus allowing me to reach the end.

Topics covered include DNA structure, function, and technology; gene mapping; pathology, and treatment; and genetic counselling and the prevention of genetic disorders. It is impossible, however, to do justice to the full range of topics and useful information included; I can only recommend that anyone interested obtains a copy and reads it from cover to cover.

R M WINTERS

Differential Diagnosis in Pediatric Radiology. By L E Swischuk. Pp 436: £72.00 hardback. Williams and Wilkins, 1984.

The author notes that the radiologist has frequently to produce a differential diagnosis, weighted if possible. In incorporating a greater amount of text and illustrations Swischuk has planned a text book going beyond a basic 'gamuts' format; this has, however, resulted in an expensive 436 page volume! There is much good material, some new, and some familiar from the author's previous publications.

Differential diagnosis is based on both systems with an extensive use of tables to aid the process. There are good references for each subsection. Many conditions referred to, particularly in the bone section, would require further reading for anyone not familiar with them. The book provides a useful learning system for differential diagnosis and as such should be of particular use to the radiologist who is undergoing further training in paediatric radiology.

R K LEVINE