

prehensive view of paediatric clinical pharmacology. The book is divided into four sections. The first section is a good introduction to both physiology and pharmacology and their inter-relation in particular in the growing child. The second section, although entitled clinical pharmacokinetics, deals with this subject in a very brief manner. The last two sections, which comprise the major part of the book, deal in separate chapters with either the pharmacology of a given system or relate to specific topics such as perinatal pharmacology or pharmacogenetics.

This is certainly a useful book, which is easy to read, and in particular its linkage between physiology and pharmacology is done in a clear and concise manner. As it is designed as a comprehensive textbook, however, there are several obvious omissions, which are disappointing. There is no description of the pharmacology of the central nervous system, and in particular anticonvulsants are not adequately discussed. As this is an area of paediatric clinical pharmacology where there has been extensive research this omission is even more surprising. Compliance, drug surveillance, and toxicity are dealt with inadequately. Although one recognises that it takes a considerable amount of time to write a book such as this, it is disappointing to see that recent trends such as zinc treatment for Wilson's disease merit only one sentence.

Despite the criticisms this is a useful book that should certainly find its way into the libraries of most paediatric departments. There now exists several textbooks of paediatric clinical pharmacology, and no doubt in the next few years several more will be brought onto the market. There still remains, however, a clear need for a shorter introduction to paediatric clinical pharmacology aimed at the paediatric registrar/research fellow/consultant who does not wish to become a paediatric

clinical pharmacologist but would like to extend his or her knowledge of the subject.

I A CHOONARA

**Emergency Management of Pediatric Trauma.** By T A Mayer. Pp 552: £78-00 hardback. W B Saunders, 1985.

This is a multi-author book from the United States hoping to be a very comprehensive reference work on the emergency care of the injured child. Indeed, it contains some worthwhile sections. I was particularly impressed by the chapters on child abuse by David Kerns and on sexual abuse by Judith Cheek. They both provide valuable guidelines for dealing with these sensitive subjects. The sections that deal with injuries to children with specific chronic diseases are also of practical value. The diseases covered include cardiac disease, haematological disorders, chronic lung disease, and renal disease.

The book, however, is disappointing in certain aspects. The section on head injuries provides little guidance on the assessment of the apparently minor head injury and how long and where such children should be observed. The chapter on poisoning fails to deal with the social aspects of this common problem. Although the introductory chapters are very comprehensive, they clearly refer to the situation in the United States and contain reference to techniques such as transfusion into the bone marrow that are not widely used in Britain.

At the price of £78 this book is unlikely to be bought by many individuals for their personal use; existing texts such as that by Cynthia Illingworth fill that market well. However, because of the comprehensive nature of the book it could well fill a demand for use in the accident and emergency department or the paediatric ward that deals with trauma.

J R SIBERT

**The Skin and Systemic Disease in Children.** By S Hurwitz. Pp 416: hardback. Year Book Medical Publishers, 1985.

If a junior medical student is asked to list the main systems of the body he is quite likely to omit one of the most important systems and certainly the most accessible, the skin. Professor Hurwitz sets out to correct this by a description of these systemic diseases that show skin manifestations, an interesting and original approach. He has chosen to do this by devoting each chapter to a separate group of conditions—for example, neurocutaneous disorders, metabolic errors, infectious diseases, etc.—and then describing in considerable detail the main diseases with cutaneous signs.

He is well placed to do this as he holds Chairs in both Paediatrics and Dermatology, and he has succeeded brilliantly. Descriptions of skin lesions are, as one would expect, very full and detailed, and it is a pleasure to read such a clear and well written text. For instance, the reviewer cannot recall a better description of Kawasaki disease, and other mysteries such as the distinction between toxic epidermal necrolysis and the staphylococcal scaled skin syndrome are clarified. The chapters, which I always find most useful in my work, are numerous and informative.

I must, however, enter one complaint. The quality of the illustrations does not always match up to the excellence of the text, and a book whose main theme is skin pathology would gain greatly from some coloured illustrations. This, however, is something that can be improved in future editions, and a book of this quality deserves it.

Professor Hurwitz says in the preface that this book was largely conceived and compiled during convalescence, and how indebted paediatricians will be to this well referenced and authoritative work.

J LUDER