This is a review of the book "Children's Diseases: Diagnosis and Assessment" by K.S. Holt. The review is written by S.W. D'Souza, Consultant paediatric neuropathologist.

The book is comprehensive and provides a wealth of information for paediatricians and other professionals involved in the care of children with neurological disorders. It is a valuable resource for medical students, residents, and practicing paediatricians.

The book covers a wide range of topics, including the history and development of neurology, the use of imaging techniques, and the management of various neurological conditions. It also includes updates on the latest research and treatment options.

The author emphasizes the importance of a multidisciplinary approach to the care of children with neurological disorders. The book is well-organized and easy to read, with clear descriptions and comprehensive discussion of each topic.

Overall, the book is highly recommended for anyone involved in the care of children with neurological disorders. It is a must-read for anyone interested in the field of paediatric neurology.
index enabling the general paediatrician to identify quickly most paediatric dermatological problems. This sets the scene for what proves to be quite a thorough book covering, in 20 chapters, dermatological aspects of paediatric practice, ranging from evaluation of the paediatric patient through to dermatopharmacology. In between there are concise, informative chapters on groups of disorders/clinical problems presented in an easily digestible but nevertheless comprehensible fashion.

The chapters on papulosquamous disorders and bullous diseases and mucocutaneous syndromes are particularly well written with excellent photographs of the various conditions throughout. Each of these chapters is subsectioned in a logical manner with brief outlines of the pathogenesis of the diseases, adding significantly both to the quality of the text as well as the reader's understanding of individual conditions. Also included in each chapter is a reasonable bibliography. On a personal note I would have liked to have seen more emphasis on the embryological development of the skin in the opening chapter. Furthermore, there are inevitable occasions when the requirement for more detail is not met

In general, however, this book meets all its intended aims, including the specific needs of most clinicians involved in the primary care of children. It would make good reading for postgraduate training as well as for a useful part of the premembership reading schedule. The majority of paediatricians, I am sure, would be happy to have this book on their shelves and it would also be useful as a quick reference guide for those with particular interests in paediatric dermatology.

Most paediatric dermatology texts fail to inspire, however the authors in this case have managed to write a most enjoyable book!

PAUL BUSS

Research fellow in medical genetics


This is a good multiauthor book on genetic disorders of the skin that sets out to describe many common and rare conditions which have a genetic basis. The conditions are grouped under useful headings such as hypopigmentation, ichthyosis, as well as for a useful part of the premembership reading schedule. The majority of paediatricians, I am sure, would be happy to have this book on their shelves and it would also be useful as a quick reference guide for those with particular interests in paediatric dermatology.

Most paediatric dermatology texts fail to inspire, however the authors in this case have managed to write a most enjoyable book!

KAREN TEMPLE

Consultant in clinical genetics


Until computerised Medline facilities became readily accessible in our libraries the Indian journals of medicine and paediatrics were largely ignored by western physicians. Even now few British medical libraries stock Indian journals. Consequently a large and fascinating body of literature has remained undiscovered. In many areas of infectious disease the Indian clinical experience is vastly greater than in the west.

Nowhere is this more true than in the field of tuberculosis. In India the annual rate of infection is about 3% and 3-4 million children are estimated to have tuberculosis. Perhaps another 94 million children are at risk of infection. No western books on paediatrics have provided a comprehensive update on the subject of childhood tuberculosis, especially in the context of the developing world.

It is therefore to the credit of Indian Paediatric that they have produced an updated compilation of papers in the form of a book. Tuberculosis in Children edited by Professor Vinmlesh Seth from the Division of Tuberculosis in the Department of Paediatrics at the All India Institute of Medical Sciences. Professor Seth herself has written most of the early chapters on epidemiology, diagnosis, immunopathogenesis, and the immunology of BCG vaccination and the tuberculin test. These chapters are readable, comprehensive, and well referenced. There have been many recent advances in mycobacterial immunology and it is to Professor Seth's credit that she has managed to be so concise. The chapters on imaging in childhood tuberculosis by Doctors S Mukhopadhyay and A K Gupta from the Department of Radiodiagnosis, All India Institute of Medical Sciences present a unique collection of x-ray films and computed tomograms which are of reasonable quality and reproduction considering the price of publication.

Perhaps the most interesting feature of the book is the chapter on neurotuberculosis by Professor P M Udani, the elder statesman of paediatric tuberculosis in India. He presents a summary of his vast clinical experience in Bombay and highlights the fascinating array of clinical pictures and syndromes which have emerged over the last decade, largely because of the extensive coverage of children with BCG vaccination and the misuse of powerful antibiotics and drugs. Consequently the clinical manifestations of neurotuberculosis have altered.

John Stanford of University College and Middlesex School of Medicine is one of only two non-Indian contributors and elegantly reviews the use of new tuberculins in studying the development of the immune response in children, the assessment of vaccine efficacy, and the value of skin tests in the assessment of immunotherapy.

This is an excellent book and the editorial staff of Indian Paediatrics deserve great credit for its rapid publication. If there is one criticism it is the absence of a community based approach to the control of tuberculosis. The book is heavily clinically orientated. Experience of community based programmes to improve case detection, follow up, and monitoring of treatment patterns would have been valuable. At 125 rupees ($15) this is a mandatory buy for any physician contemplating working in a developing country.

ANTHONY COSTELLO
Senior lecturer


Medical students choosing textbooks usually have to decide between a handbook containing brief summaries of common conditions, or a tome with detailed monographs on every rarity. In either case, they may well feel that what they read does not stand up to their encounter with a patient in hospital or in the community. This book, which was designed as a companion to the clinical paediatric course at the University of Texas at Galveston, offers an original approach to teaching about patients rather than diseases.

The authors' objectives of teaching 'real life' paediatrics is reflected in their arrangement of chapters: they are what is usually taught by senior residents, who pick up a number of common clinical presentations, such as the child with fever, abdominal pain, or enlarged lymph nodes. The main text of each chapter is preceded by a statement of the objectives and a test of prerequisite scientific and clinical knowledge. Much emphasis is placed on assessment of indicators of illness severity. The student will learn how to decide which children may be treated at home, which need further investigation, and which are in 'pre-arrest status'. The text is profusely illustrated with short clinical histories and each chapter is followed by 10 to 20 multiple choice questions, often on patient management problems. One or two sections, such as the chapter on congenital heart disease, revert to a traditional didactic style, but in the main the problem orientated approach is maintained, and there is a consistency of style.