Children: a Handbook for Children's Doctors, edited by Peter Gray and Forrester Cockburn. Pp.ix + 374, illustrated. Pitman, London, 1984. £30.00.

With the wealth of books on paediatric subjects, including comprehensive text-books, monographs on every system and organ, works on neonatal medicine, and year books, one may wonder whether there is a place for yet another. That is, until one picks up this new work edited by Professors Gray and Cockburn, and realises, with some surprise, that there was indeed an unfilled niche.

This book is described in the Preface as dealing largely with normal and abnormal growth and development, but actually covers a good deal more. There is, for example, an excellent chapter on genetics, easily comprehensible to the reviewer, who is a paediatrician, but no geneticist, and very good chapters on medical and social services and the law, children and the environment, interviewing children and their parents, and so on. Indeed it is rather difficult to see where one could readily turn for such information, or for such topics as maternal drugs and the fetus, and drugs in breast milk (both covered in very good tables). The Tables in fact are quite a feature of the book, being simpler and more practical in content than those usually published. Even more noteworthy are the appendices, which occupy almost a third of the entire text. These are usually a neglected part of a text-book, but these would greatly repay study, and alone would make the book worth having.

The editors do ask for constructive criticism. Perhaps in future they may consider that a book of this type deserves a larger section on poisoning and on the physiotherapeutic and orthopaedic aspects of cerebral palsy.

This is therefore an admirable book. Being almost in essay form, it is the more readable, and thus, one hopes, will be the more read.

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Clinical Optics, Andrew R. Elkington and Helena J. Frank. Pp.ix + 164, illustrated. Blackwell Scientific Publications, Oxford, London, Edinburgh, Boston, Palo Alto, Melbourne, 1984. £12.00.

This work is intended for trainee eye surgeons and concisely covers the required basic knowledge for the Diploma in Ophthalmology and the Fellowship. In so far as it caters for the complete tyro, the approach is refreshingly simple and working from first principles is both readable and easily assimilated. The format is essentially illustrative with no more text nor more mathematics than is necessary to maintain interest and to inform without complexity. At appropriate points the practical relevance of the optics under discussion is well brought out. It is, of course, true that the contents of this work are embodied in other texts directed at a similar readership and the only slight cavil relates to the necessity for such abstraction. But from this standpoint it offers a condensed and easy reference point for the essential optics of ophthalmology, covering the physical properties of light, prisms, lenses, spectacle prescriptions, normal and abnormal refraction of the eye as well as the optics of low visual aids and ophthalmic instruments.

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Dermatology Revision: MCQs, Case Histories and Picture Interpretation, S.K. Goolamali. Pp.241, illustrated. Churchill Livingstone, Edinburgh, London, Melbourne, New York, 1984. £37.95.

Dr Goolamali has given birth to a lively, readable, sensible and valuable little 'reader' in dermatology. Not a systematic textbook, but one whose 200 multiple choice questions, each with 'over the page' answers, and commentary, covers a remarkable amount of ground.

In addition, there are 20 case histories well illustrated in colour and with an appropriate pithy commentary.

This paperback is not suitable for the beginner in dermatology, but is ideal for the doctor one to two years into training in the speciality. Indeed, all of us beyond that stage will be embarrassed by the gaps in our knowledge which the MCQs reveal. If and when an examination in dermatology becomes obligatory in the UK, Dr Goolamali will be ready with his 'Rev-

Errata

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Book Reviews, page 279. The price of 'Dermatology Revision: MCQs, Case Histories and Picture Interpretation' by S.K. Goolamali (published by Churchill Livingstone) was given as £37.95. This should have been £7.95.

Volume 61, No. 718, June 1985.

The captions to Figures 2 and 3 in the paper 'Gallstone ileus' by L. Kreel, pp. 511–512, were reversed. We apologise for this error.