The Genetics of Renal Tract Disorders

By M d'A Crawford. (Pp 663.) Oxford: Oxford University Press. 1988.

With an ever increasing knowledge of genetic disease there is a very real need for well documented, scholarly reviews of individual disorders or groups of related disorders. Martin Crawford's monograph fills such a need. Though he admits that inevitably such a text may be "... outdated by the time it is published", I do not think this is a serious drawback, for rarely do immediate research results make all previously gleaned information completely redundant.

This text has certain features which will endear it to clinical geneticists. Firstly, it is comprehensive, covering all aspects of genetic renal disease including many rare syndromes. There is a particularly useful section on nephropathies secondary to systemic disorders. Secondly, the emphasis is genetic providing important information for counselling and

indicating where prenatal diagnosis is feasible. Thirdly, and perhaps most importantly for the younger specialist seeking possible avenues for research, he frequently indicates where important clinical and genetic information is still needed, as for example in adult onset polycystic kidney disease and Alport's disease. Finally, the text is, as far as I can tell, accurate and certainly extremely well documented. Many classic older references are included, as well as more recent ones concerned with cytogenetic and recombinant DNA findings. Perhaps as a clinician I would like to have seen some clinical photographs included, but the line drawings and illustrations of pathology are excellent.

This is one of those books one would unreservedly recommend to a library and might even purchase oneself. Certainly anyone working in the field of genetic renal disease will need it as an authoritative text for some years to come.

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