object of providing clear and comprehensible information. If the young doctor or health visitor really needs to know about Börjeson-Forssman-Lehmann syndrome on his or her daily rounds, then I think it would be better to take a rucksack and pack a small library rather than try to cram it all into one book in a pocket. It is simply not possible to provide meaningful descriptions of these sorts of syndromes in short entries of between three and 17 words in length.

This is sad because in the chapters of the book where more time has been spent on one topic, such as sudden infant death syndrome, the information is presented very clearly and usefully. There are four helpful chapters about child abuse including one on the law, which gives a clear account of the Children Act 1989. I would, however, question, some of the advice given about child sexual abuse, in particular no clear guidelines as to when forensic evidence is appropriate, and rare though these occasions be may, they are vital. It is also misleading to indicate that perpetrators are usually outside the family.

Accident prevention is also covered in some detail, which I would guess is a subject of particular interest to the author. Other important topics, however, such as normal growth and development and educational paediatrics, are far less well covered, difficult to understand in some areas because of the brevity of the descriptions, and really worryingly out of date in others, for example, vision and hearing tests. The reader is not given a clear picture of what is common and uncommon. Down's syndrome, trisomies 13 and 18, and the cri du chat syndrome are given equal prominence.

The book concludes with a useful appendix giving addresses of organisations which help children and families with special needs, and a bibliography listing a number of books which provide in-depth information about the large number of topics that this small book attempts to cover in just 147 pages of text.

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The Child's Foot and Ankle. Edited by James C Drennan. (Pp 559; price not stated, hardback.) Raven Press, 1992. ISBN 0-88167-879-1.

In general the adult foot does not receive the same respect accorded to the hand. This may be due to the fact that in western societies our feet are usually covered, and sometimes smelly and dirty when examined. Children's feet, however, with their potential for growth and implications for the future, together with the pressure produced by anxious parents, are treated with more care.

This book deals with disorders of the foot and ankle in children from the viewpoint of orthopaedic surgeons, but nevertheless contains much of interest to paediatricians because of the breadth of the editor's approach. In orthopaedic clinics in children's hospitals, foot problems form a substantial part of the

workload. Dr James Drennan has produced a large volume (559 pages), with the help of 30 contributors, all from North America, and provided a comprehensive survey of the field. Common problems such as club feet are covered in detail, but there are in addition, several chapters that extend the reader's horizon. These include contributions on neuromuscular disease by Irwin Siegel, chronic inflammatory arthritides and disease related to the haemopoietic system by Walter Greene, and genetic conditions by Kenneth Guidera. This latter chapter, and the section on osteochondrodysplasias, make it easy to look up and find details of the bewildering syndromes that are familiar to paediatricians. Trauma is not neglected, and as one would expect in a book from North America, there is a section on sports related injuries. It was reassuring to find a conservative approach advocated for the frequently seen hypermobile flat foot, with little place for surgery. Similarly, for ingrown toenails, simple nail avulsion is condemned and wedge resection and phenolisation of the nail matrix recommended. The new concept of gradual progressive correction of deformity introduced by Ilizarov is mentioned for treatment in arthrogryposis, but not for relapsed club foot where it clearly has a place.

Dr Drennan has made a significant addition to the relatively sparse literature on the child's foot and this book should certainly be available for consultation in the libraries of all paediatric departments.

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