largely irrelevant. The interested reader will find more information in the proceedings of two international meetings already held for neonatal thyroid screening. The final section on treatment is also a disappointment. Considerable effort is expended to illustrate how unreliable are the clinical symptoms and signs of congenital hypothyroidism—surely a fact that is fully appreciated and has been acted on for nearly 10 years now by the introduction of mass screening programmes. I was hoping to be educated on the psychological and neurological development in treated infants, but sadly this topic was discussed in a cursory manner. Perhaps this, more than any other part of the monograph, illustrated that the editors could have done better had they spread their net further to encompass other groups of workers who have made important contributions to the subject of congenital hypothyroidism. Paediatricians and endocrinologists working on neonatal hypothyroid screening programmes will find parts of this monograph valuable; I would not advocate it to a wider readership.

J G BISENDE


This small book crams an immense amount of concisely written information into its 66 pages and, writing from the admittedly inexpert viewpoint of parent of a 9 year old daughter recently diagnosed as asthmatic, I would recommend it to the parents of any asthmatic child.

By means of a simple but effective question and answer format the author gives a clear general picture of both the symptoms and possible causes of asthma with a brief but helpful look at the highly complex subject of allergies. The various tests used to diagnose asthma are described, as are their purposes, and a comprehensive breakdown of the various drugs and courses of treatment currently available is given, together with helpful comments on possible side effects. The great majority of these drugs are remarkably safe and effective and can be used over long periods; however the author also includes a reassuring paragraph on the controlled occasional use of systemic steroids.

Unconventional methods of treatment such as homoeopathy, herbal remedies, and hypnosis are briefly touched on, as are the use of ionisers and humidifiers. Professor Milner is not in general convinced of their efficacy but recognises the fact that they have been known to prove useful in some cases. The importance of a calm, unworried attitude on the part of the parents is constantly stressed: the contents of this book should do much to ensure that this attitude is entirely unforced and genuine.

SARAH GLEADELL


The previous edition of this book was published in 1977. In the last seven years there have been many changes in our approach to respiratory problems, particularly in the neonatal period, so this new edition is not before its time. The main format is unchanged, although there is new blood among the authors and nine new topics have been covered including pulmonary complications of gastrooesophageal reflux, immotile cilia syndrome, Legionnaire's disease, and the sudden infant death syndrome. As before, the first section covers the anatomical and physiological development of the lung; examination, diagnostic and treatment procedures, lung function testing, and the effects of age. The next section, on respiratory intensive care, is relatively brief and followed by 90 pages on neonatal respiratory problems including congenital abnormalities. The viral and bacterial infections are grouped together. The fifth section comprises non-infective problems including asthma, emphysema, fibrosing alveolitis, and reflux. Diseases which also have effects outside the lung are discussed in the remaining third of the book.

Many of the sections are disappointing and have been dealt with far better in individual texts elsewhere. This is particularly true of the chapters on lung physiology, intensive and neonatal care, and the more common respiratory problems including asthma and cystic fibrosis. The book's strength lies in the fact that it is comprehensive and will be an invaluable reference source for those caring for children with obscure lung diseases. It is apparent from the bibliography that it has had a relatively long gestation; none of the references are for papers written after...