treatment for respiratory distress in preterm infants but when babies below 28 weeks' gestation did not usually survive. As the specialty has changed and grown, so has the Cleveland textbook. The latest edition has 36 contributors, all but one from the US, and many from Cleveland itself.

The authors have kept the combination of neonatal physiology and practical advice on management which was a successful feature of previous editions. There are 19 chapters, two completely new and the remainder brought up to date. The chapters cover all the important aspects of neonatal care, although one on the dysmorphic infant would be welcome. Those on antenatal and intrapartum care, the physical environment, care of the parents, respiratory problems, and the heart are particularly good. A new chapter on ethical issues in the perinatal period addresses the question 'who makes the decision about forgoing life-sustaining treatment for a patient?' in the light of the 1984 'Baby Doe' law. The answer is the doctors and parents in partnership, taking account of the expected quality of life of the infant, a view most UK paediatricians accept and practise. The other new chapter is on nursing practice in the neonatal intensive care unit. This is excellent, particularly on the topics of light, noise, handling, positioning, and skin care of very immature infants.

Overall the book has an air of authority and the views expressed are usually cautious and sensible. Neonatal intensive care units should add it to their libraries.

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The Pediatric Spine; Principles and Practice. Vol 1 and 2. Edited by Stuart L Weinstein. (Pp 2092; \$359.50 hardback.) Raven Press, 1993. ISBN 0-7817-0028-0.

The launch of a major new textbook that is obviously going to become a definitive reference book is an exciting event. This magnificent text on the paediatric spine, principles and practice, edited by Stuart Weinstein from Iowa City, can certainly be put in that category.

This book is the only comprehensive text devoted exclusively to the subject of the paediatric spine. It is a multiauthor book and the list of contributors reads like a who's who of spinal surgery. Most of the 126 contributors are drawn from the major spinal centres in the USA but there are other notable contributions from Europe and Asia.

The book is in two volumes with 85 chapters and 1959 pages. It covers the whole range of spinal problems in childhood. The initial chapters deal with the anatomy, biomechanics, patient evaluation and investigation including a very important chapter by Howard King on a subject about which very little has been written, that of back pain in children.

Other topics covered in volume 1 are congenital and developmental abnormalities; trauma; inflammatory and infectious conditions; neoplasms and metabolic diseases. Each chapter is concisely written by an expert in the field and there is an excellent bibliography at the end of each chapter. Diagrams and illustrations are plentiful, well produced, and enhance the text. I particularly enjoyed the chapter on three dimensional analysis of

the scoliotic spine by Jean Dubousset which explains a very difficult concept with great clarity.

Topics of interest to the paediatric neurosurgeon such as Chiari malformations, tethered cord, syringomyelia, and spinal cord tumour are well covered. There are also chapters on neuromuscular diseases, anaesthetic considerations, and neurophysiology that will be of interest to colleagues in these disciplines.

Most of volume 2 is dedicated to surgical approaches and surgical techniques. There are good descriptions of the more commonly used instrumentation systems including Harrington, Luque, TSRH, Isola, CD, and Zielke. These chapters are particularly well illustrated and provide a much better description of the various surgical techniques involved than many books devoted entirely to operative surgery.

The final section of the book is a very useful 128 page appendix which compliments the text chapters and serves as a supplemental reference source for information on terminology and definitions; embryology, growth and maturation, radiographic measurements, and classifications referable to the paediatric spine.

All in all this book will make an outstanding addition to the knowledge and understanding of spinal problems in childhood. It is certainly a book I would recommend to all units dealing with paediatric spinal conditions. It will be of use not just to the trainee but will provide a valuable source of reference to all paediatric spinal surgeons and their colleagues.

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