

ture by J. D. N. Lawson of three times that length. The Sheffield group of K. B. Zachary, J. Lister, and W. J. W. Sharrard provides a useful account of spina bifida, drawing on their exceptional experience to give a consolidated account of treatment methods, although 'recent advances' in this field remain sadly few.

The modest format of the book, plus the brevity with which several of the subjects are treated, makes me wonder if the specialist paediatric surgeon, who glances at it, will judge it too lacking in depth to teach him much. For example, in the chapter by J. Lister on repair of oesophageal atresia, the crucial question of how to handle the case where primary repair is not possible is dealt with too cursorily to be of much practical use, while the author himself provides here no clear idea of what his own current practice is. References are given without titles, which surely must halve their usefulness.

Pediatric Surgery. Edited by O. SWENSON. 3rd Edition. Volume I (Pp. xiv + 768; illustrated + tables) 2 volumes. £20. London: Butterworths; New York: Apple-Century-Crofts. 1969.

This is the third edition of the standard textbook by Professor Swenson and 24 colleagues at the Children's Memorial Hospital and Northwestern University, Chicago. The opening chapters deal very fully with general considerations such as neonatal physiology, genetics, anaesthetics, intensive care, and psychological effects of hospitalization—a topic which it is good to see discussed so thoughtfully in a surgical textbook. The remaining sections cover surgical problems comprehensively under the usual anatomical headings. Neurosurgery, orthopaedics, and other surgical specialities are included.

The text is, of course, intended primarily for the surgeon, and surgical techniques are described in detail with numerous illustrations. However, this book will also be of great value to the paediatrician, providing clear and authoritative guidance on the surgical problems which he frequently encounters. The style is readable; the photographs, x-rays, drawings, and diagrams are of exceptional quality, and the two volumes are particularly handsomely produced.

Current Pediatric Therapy. 4. Edited by SIDNEY S. GELLIS and BENJAMIN M. KAGAN. (Pp. lii + 1077. £11 9s. 6d.) Philadelphia and London: W. B. Saunders. 1970)

This is a big book, two-thirds as big as *Nelson's Text-book of Pediatrics*, and 18 of its 1000 odd pages are required to list the 334 contributors (is this a record?).

This question has to be asked—is the idea of divorcing therapy from the rest of medicine a good or even a possible one? This book has failed to convince one reader that it is. Many contributors have clearly given up the attempt to restrict themselves solely to treatment, so that some articles differ little from those to be found in a full textbook. Others seem to have felt that the amount of space devoted to a subject ought to bear some relation to its importance, whereby an article on obesity

is given 3 pages, though the message from its author could virtually have been given in the same number of words—'Treatment is hopeless'. Similarly, the section on intussusception (2 pages) boils down to little more than a statement that there exists a choice of two methods of treatment, surgical or enema reduction, though the author might surely have discussed indications for the employment of each.

Here and there one encounters pearls, as, for instance, J. D. Crawford's excellent account of the management of the too-tall girl. But even here the disadvantages of restricting discussion solely to therapy are evident, as the crucial question of diagnosis, i.e. prediction of height in these individuals, is not covered.

It is only fair to add that there are clearly many paediatricians who by no means share this reviewer's lukewarm appreciation of the book, to judge from the wide circulation enjoyed by the three previous volumes.

Perinatal Medicine. 1st European Congress, Berlin.

Edited by PETER JOHN HUNTINGFORD, KARL ARNO HÜTER, and ERICH SALING. (Pp. xii + 229; 197 illustrations + 93 tables. DM. 57.) Stuttgart: Georg Thieme; New York and London: Academic Press. 1969.

This book gives an account of the proceedings of the First European Congress of Perinatal Medicine held in Berlin in March 1968. Over 80 articles are included in its 300 pages and they can be classified under three main headings. The first is concerned with antenatal diagnosis and treatment, the emphasis being heavily on the problem of severe rhesus iso-immunization. One must hopefully look to the reports of future congresses for consideration of disturbances in placental function or indeed any of the obstetric aspects of prematurity, which assume increasing importance in view of the great demands on medical and nursing skills created by neonatal special care units. The second section deals with the monitoring of the fetus in the intrapartum period, and to judge from the places of origin of the articles presented here it would seem that Saling's influence remains stronger on the continent of Europe than in Britain. It is pertinent to mention here the excellence throughout of the English translations, which have been undertaken by Dr. W. B. Schulze. The later sections are concerned with the newborn infant, and cover resuscitation, energy requirements, and the management of respiratory difficulty; and here many notable British contributions are well represented.

It has apparently been the editor's intention that the individual chapters should be largely self contained. To some extent this aim has been achieved, but liberal quantities of space given to diagrams and tables of results have left little room for the development of the authors' arguments, and in the end the over-all impression is of a book which contains a series of brief and somewhat dogmatic accounts of personal practice. Most of the discussions have been omitted and only occasionally does the flavour of genuine debate and discussion break through, most clearly, needless to say, in the section on resuscitation.