Book reviews

Atherosclerosis: Its Pediatric Aspects. Clinical Cardiology Monographs. Edited by W. B. Strong. (Pp. 330; illustrated + tables. £12.85 hardback.) Grune and Stratton: New York. 1978.

This monograph comprises a series of papers about the risk factors for atherosclerosis. This is a popular subject at the present time and it certainly is useful to have an up-to-date statement of the art. I do not think that the book contains anything very startling or new, but it is a good starting point for anybody who wishes to get into the field.

There is first a generally rather optimistic overview, which is summed up in the Foreword, where the first sentence concludes: '... the best available data suggest that if 11 known risk factors were controlled in adults, *only* 50% of the cases might be prevented' (my italics).

One of the most intriguing facets of atherosclerosis concerns its geographical pathology and the chapters from Newman and Strong and from Hames and colleagues in Georgia concentrate on this. Henry Neufeld contributes some more of his intriguing arterial pictures, which have much to do with the genetic and environmental determinants of atherosclerosis. Lipids, lipoproteins, hypertension, smoking, nutrition, and exercise are considered in some detail.

I found the most interesting chapter to be the one about atherosclerosis prevention in Arizona. Nobody knows whether such programmes will actually reduce the incidence of it, but as Henry McGill is reported to have said: 'Nobody has ever shown that high cholesterol levels, high blood pressure, or smoking is good for your health, nor has anyone demonstrated the benefits of obesity or sedentary living habits'.

I am glad to have this book and I hope that it will be available in the larger libraries. I think academic departments of paediatrics ought to possess it, but I would not advise every paediatrician to go out and buy his own copy.

C. G. D. BROOK.

Atlas of Abdominal Ultrasonography in Children. By G. F. Gates. (Pp. 283; illustrated. £16.50 hardback.) Churchill Livingstone: Edinburgh. 1978.

Although this book is entitled *Atlas of Abdominal Ultrasonography in Children*, it is much more than that. It is a summary of differential diagnosis and of the most appropriate and rewarding investigations that should be performed in abdominal disorders, with the emphasis on radioisotope and ultrasonic scanning.

The author is Associate Clinical Professor of Radiology and Director of the Department of Nuclear Medicine and Ultrasound in the Children's Hospital in Los Angeles, so it is easy to see why he has approached the subject of ultrasonography from this, the ideal point of view.

There are chapters on the liver and spleen, biliary system (including the pancreas), midabdomen, pelvis, and kidneys. The introduction gives the essential points that should be looked for by the referring clinician on the indications for ultrasonic scanning and the limitations of it, and there is useful and practical advice for those starting an ultrasonic scanning programme. The complementary nature of ultrasonic scanning to diagnostic radiology and radioisotope imaging is emphasised, and its noninvasive nature stressed, explaining its ready acceptance by most children. Much of the book is devoted to illustrations which are mainly of good quality, although the text is interesting and readable.

At £16.50 the book is a good buy for departments of diagnostic imaging. It can be recommended to all those who scan paediatric patients, to the referring clinicians, and those who are about to sit an examination in diagnostic imaging or who wish to bring themselves up to date with recent advances in this field.

BARBARA C. KING

Nutrition, Immunity, and Infection. Mechanisms of Interactions. By R. K. Chandra and P. M. Newberne. (Pp. 246; illustrated + tables. \$22.50 hardback.) Plenum: New York. 1977.

The authors have addressed themselves to one aspect of clinical immunology that is currently exciting interest and consuming a good deal of effort in research and clinical immunology. They draw attention to the fact that perhaps a hundred million children suffer from kwashiorkor and that minor forms of

nutritional deficiency must therefore be very much more common. It has been widely believed that malnutrition is associated with an increased hazard of infection, and so a scientific text examining this possibility more fully must be widely welcomed. Their book, which fills 233 pages including bibliography, is divided into 9 chapters. At the beginning a careful, detailed, and up-to-date account is given of the immunological resources of the developing human organism. There follows a full and helpful chapter concerned with the assessment of nutritional status including nutritional aspects of fetal life. The middle section of the book deals with the interactions between infection and immune responses, and the metabolic effects of infections. This section is detailed and is linked, as other sections are, to a full and up-to-date bibliography. Towards the end there is a section dealing with those topics in a comparative manner referring to research in nonhuman species, and finally, there are useful sections on the wider biological implications of infection, nutrition, and immunity, together with a comment on further research needs.

The book is well illustrated and contains a number of useful factual tables. It would perhaps have been helpful to have a numbered list of headings with the title of each chapter since each paragraph is carefully numbered. With this minor criticism the book can nevertheless be strongly recommended to clinical researchers and those who are interested in related subjects of immunology and nutrition. The book provides a very good framework and is not too expensive for purchase or too lengthy to read. It is to be hoped that the authors will be prepared to maintain the book through a number of editions for although it is now fully up to date one can imagine that in this expanding subject revision will be necessary within 3 or 4 years. This shows the value of the book rather than affords a criticism.

C. B. S. WOOD

Paediatric Cardiology. By R. H. Anderson and E. A. Shinebourne. (Pp. 616; illustrated + tables. £18.00 hardback.) Churchill Livingstone: Edinburgh. 1978.

This book is an account of the proceedings