It is obvious that this book was written for respiratory technologists, a group of paramedics currently unknown in the UK, and it concentrates entirely on lung disease. As such it is inadequate for medical students or nurses, even for those working in neonatal intensive care units, and will be of little value even for house officers in such units. As may be expected of such a book it places considerable emphasis on physiotherapy, which at best is unnecessary in most neonates with respiratory illness and is usually risky. The authors are dangerously casual about the hazards of hyperoxaemia—they recommend high Fo2 for treating pneumothorax and for resuscitating premature infants with recurrent apnoea by bag and mask ventilation using 100% oxygen; this is the most effective way of creating retrolental fibroplasia.

For all these reasons, and because of the price, I think this book will have a very limited readership in the UK.

N R C ROBERTON


The paediatric neurologists at the University of Minnesota Medical School have written this useful review. In their preface they refer modestly to the book's ancestry and its relation to an earlier book of theirs, Neuromuscular diseases of infancy and childhood. Their approach is a practical one which has proved its value for training students and house staff.

Two chapters deal with diagnosis and laboratory tests and the remaining 8 with clinical conditions. The discussion of these is generally good: in describing numerous disorders which show only minor variations from one another it is only too easy to produce lists of symptoms and signs of great sameness and soporific power. This has been avoided and the reader's interest is maintained.

The clinical photographs and illustrations of biopsies are well chosen. The line drawings of gross and microscopic anatomy are excellent and helpful to an understanding of the pathophysiology. The chapter on disorders of peripheral nerves and spinal nerve roots is of special value and includes discussions of facial palsy, postinjection nerve paralysis, and postimmunisation neuropathy; good accounts of these are not readily available elsewhere.

It is inevitable that this book must be compared with Victor Dubowitz's Muscle disorders in childhood which, in terms of value for money and richness of clinical and biopsy illustration, I think is still the best buy in this field although it was published a year earlier. However, Swaiman and Wright have clearly succeeded in their aim of providing concise, useful, and current information.

EDWARD BRETT

Shorter notice


Follow-up of the increasing numbers of low birthweight survivors has become fashionable in the USA. This book is the result of a conference on the subject held in Arizona in 1978. Brazelton, Kennix, Klaus, Lubchenko, and Parmelee are among the contributors. There are chapters headed 'Parenting in the premature nursery,' 'Early intervention and school programme for the pre-school handicapped', 'The role of parent groups', 'Legal implications of neonatal care', and 'The influence of caregiver: infant interaction on development'. Other topics such as bronchopulmonary dysplasia and retrolental fibroplasia find a place, and details are given of certain of the physical scars of intensive care. Those involved would find this book worthwhile reading.