Book reviews

Assisted Ventilation of the Neonate. Edited by J P Goldsmith and E H Karotkin. (Pp. 390; illustrated + tables. £30.00 hardback.) Saunders: Eastbourne. 1981.

This multiple-author book is concerned almost exclusively, and in a very detailed way, with the 'how to do it' and 'what to do it with' aspects of neonatal ventilatory support. It deals with applied pulmonary physiology, resuscitation, the advantages and disadvantages of different ventilator types and of specific commercial ventilators, the application and effects of continuous distending pressure, the functions and selection of the various ventilator settings, the general care of the infant and his endotracheal tube, arterial blood sampling and blood gas interpretation, the complications of assisted ventilation, the cardiovascular aspects of respiratory disease, monitoring, surgical management of the airway, transport of ventilated infants, and pharmacological adjuncts to ventilatory therapy. In addition to the chapters on respiration there is an excellent one on nutritional care followed by chapters on central nervous system morbidity and intra-operative care.

Inevitably differences in the organisation and practice of neonatology between the UK and USA limit the relevance of parts of this book to UK practice so that, for example, the 34 pages devoted to volume-cycled and negative pressure ventilators may not interest many UK paediatricians, and the Draeger babylog ventilator which is used frequently in Britain is not mentioned. However, the prospective reader should not be discouraged since the book contains much of universal appeal and in general it is well written, up to date, well illustrated and referenced, and contains a lot of thought-provoking information. Despite the fact that mortality from respiratory disease is now considerably lower as a result of improvements in intensive care methods, only the most arrogant paediatrician would feel that the battle had been won. This book makes a useful contribution to the knowledge of anyone caring for infants with pulmonary disorders. However, it is a book to be read critically by the already

initiated rather than used as a cot side guide by newly appointed house officers. It should find a place in most special care baby unit libraries.

(There is a potentially dangerous error on page 261, where in table 14.9 digoxin doses have been erroneously printed in mg/kg instead of $\mu\text{g/kg}$.)

P R F DEAR

Clubfoot. By V J Turco. Current Problems in Orthopaedics Series. (Pp. 193; illustrated + tables. £16.00 hardback.) Churchill Livingstone: Edinburgh. 1981.

This book is written by a recognised expert in the field of children's orthopaedics and contains a pithy review of the literature on the aetiology and treatment of clubfoot. Uncontentious sections on the history of the treatment of the condition and the anatomy of the normal foot are followed by the author's own views on the underlying nature of this common but mysterious deformity and on its treatment. The literature is sprinkled with monographs on the subject many of which lack the authority of this book, and the interested senior orthopaedic registrar will find that the early chapters answer most of his questions and lead him to relevant recent original papers for the references are well chosen. However, when he reaches the chapters on treatment he will be disappointed; unfortunately, the author gives details of non-operative treatment for clubfoot which most surgeons agree is obsolete. Nowadays it is thought that clubfeet fall into two main groups, those that are lax and correctable passively and those that are rigidly deformed; it is generally recognised that the lax postural kind has a good prognosis whatever the treatment, and that the rigid kind responds best to radical early surgical correction. This book could mislead the tyro who may surmise that rigid clubfeet respond to aggressive non-operative treatment and that operations are reserved for failures of manipulative treatment, therefore I would not recommend it for first essential reading. However, the interested experienced surgeon will find it a good read and for him I highly recommend it.

MICHAEL WATSON

Paediatric Anaesthesia. Trends in Current Practice. By G Jackson Rees and T Cecil Gray. (Pp. 194; illustrated + tables. £15.00 hardback.) Butterworth: London. 1981.

The subtitle 'Trends in current practice' conveys the approach; it is not a textbook on all aspects of anaesthetic practice applicable to children but a selection of topics covered by experts in this field.

There are reviews of psychological, physiological, and pharmacological factors that need to be considered when anaesthetising children, as well as descriptions of preoperative preparation, induction and maintenance of anaesthesia, and intravenous fluid management. The section on apparatus, by John Inkster, and on respiratory measurement in infancy, by David Hatch, were particularly interesting. Anaesthesia for cardiac surgery, IPPV in children, and tracheostomy and prolonged endotracheal intubation are dealt with very helpfully, but neurosurgical anaesthesia is omitted.

In the preface the authors indicate that the book is intended as a guide for the general anaesthetist who is also called upon to anaesthetise children; however, the special considerations needed in day-stay surgery and outpatient dental anaesthesia which must constitute a large proportion of the anaesthetics administered to children by general anaesthetists are not covered; yet there are 85 references on the pharmacology of neuromuscular blocking agents in children.

Because experts from different centres have written the various interesting sections the approaches and standards are not as uniform as might have been expected from the renowned Liverpool team. Although this is far from being a 'recipe-book' on how to administer anaesthetics to children there are several sections containing authoritative guidance. It was disappointing to find that few of the many references had been published during the last five years. There is only a small number of illustrations.

To encourage an intelligent and informed approach this book should be read and digested by everyone concerned in the anaesthetic care of children, and by