those working for higher examinations in the specialty.

PENELOPE B HEWITT

Van Leeuwen's Newborn Medicine, second edition. Edited by C L Paxson, Jr. (Pp. 561; illustrated + tables. £24.00 hardback.) YB Medical Publishers: London. 1979.

This is the second edition of a book that first appeared as *A manual of newborn medicine*; it retains Van Leeuwen's original objective which was 'a think and do book, emphasising the do'. Now, under the editorship of Charles Paxson, there are no fewer than 23 contributors, all from the USA. In addition to the conventional system-orientated chapters there are helpful sections on neonatal mortality and morbidity trends, high-risk pregnancy, practical procedures, radiology, and ethical problems. As one might expect the broad scope causes much overlapping between certain chapters as well as patchy quality, but the overall standard is good. I particularly liked the way important physiological principles were explained and supported by nicely reproduced figures and tables taken from original classical papers. The black and white photographs are clear and even the reproduced x-ray films show what the captions say they should.

I think this book is too extensive for the beginner in neonatal paediatrics for whom more simple texts are available, but it would be suitable for those who have a grounding on the subject and wish to add to and consolidate their knowledge at a leisurely pace.

MALCOLM L CHISWICK

Ophthalmology for the Pediatric Practitioner. By R M Robb. (Pp. 163; illustrated. \$26.00.) Little Brown: Boston. 1981.

This book contains 11 chapters, the first of which is devoted to eye examination in children and shows the importance of routine screening. The remaining chapters cover major paediatric eye disorders

including strabismus, lens abnormalities, glaucoma, ocular infections and inflammations, developmental abnormalities, ptosis and ocular neoplasms, the ocular manifestations of systemic disease, and ocular trauma. Each chapter covers the field well and the author always carefully explains the ophthalmological terms used. There are excellent diagrams and photographs.

In the chapter on strabismus the importance of the cover test is carefully and clearly explained and there is sufficient detail to enable the paediatrician to grasp the rationale of treatment without embarking on intricate details.

The two chapters on ocular manifestations of systemic disease and neuro-ophthalmology are excellent. For each disorder there is a brief description of the systemic manifestations and then a clear description of the ocular manifestations, their visual consequences, and their management. At the end of each chapter there are comprehensive references to the literature.

Overall this is an excellent, concise book which covers an area very much neglected until recently and I have no hesitation in recommending it to paediatricians as well as to ophthalmologists in training.

D M CALVER

Spina Bifida Occulta. Orthopaedic, Radiological, and Neurological Aspects. By C C Michael James and L P Lassman. (Pp. 230; illustrated + tables. £20.00 hardback.) Grune & Stratton: New York. 1981.

This reviews the experience of managing 200 consecutive patients with closed spina bifida. The clinical presentation, radiological investigation, and surgical treatment are dealt with in considerable detail, and there is a chapter on embryology; each of the chapters has a useful list of references. The particular value of this book will be the chapters which discuss the problems of managing patients with diastematomyelia, lumbosacral lipomas,

dermoid cysts, and what the authors call meningocele manqué.

Although in various places patients are said either to have benefited from surgical intervention or had their deterioration halted, this question is not examined in depth. It is unfortunate that early in the introduction it is stated as a fact that surgical freeing of the spinal cord and nerve roots can be followed by improved function; since this is the major question the book would have been greatly improved if the detailed evidence on this difficult subject had been presented in one place. This discussion would need to take note of the fact that most of the patients are children who are naturally showing rapid acquisition of motor skills in the first few years of life but also suffering the handicap of deformity increasing as a result of fixed neurological deficit because of growth. The authors acknowledge the lack of urological data and this is a major deficiency because of the increasing importance now attached to the diagnosis and management of neuropathic bladder in association with closed spina bifida. The genetic implications of the condition are not discussed. Despite these shortcomings this is an important contribution to the subject and specialists in the field will benefit by having this book available.

B G R NEVILLE

Shorter notice

The Battered Child. By N O'Doherty. (Pp. 57; illustrated. £9.75 hardback.) Bailliere Tindall: London. 1982.

This is an attractively presented collection of colour photographs and x-ray films that show the different manifestations of non-accidental injury; there are four or five pictures on a page each with a useful brief explanatory text on the facing page. The colour pictures are generally of good quality but many of the x-ray films are insufficiently labelled and too small to be useful to the junior doctors to whom this book may appeal.