As few of us can have escaped participation in a drug trial at some time or other perhaps a section concerning the ethics, design, and statistical considerations of these trials in neonates would have been useful.

This is a well presented, scholarly, and comprehensive text which should become a standard reference for neonatal pharmacology.

SHEILA MCKENZIE

Postgraduate Nephrology. Edited by F Marsh. Pp. 646: £40.00 hardback. Heinemann, 1985.

This excellent and comprehensive book should become standard reading for MRCP candidates and those undertaking junior clinical appointments in renal units. The literary style varies, as in any multi-author work, but the high standard, clear type, and non-reflective paper mean long periods of study are possible. Tables and illustrations are well chosen to complement the text and I found I enjoyed reading the book virtually from cover to cover.

Although essentially an 'adult' textbook, points relevant to paediatric practice are encountered in almost every section, complementing a superb cameo of the 'Kidney in Childhood' provided by Professor Barratt's chapter. Throughout the book, the scientific basis of each aspect of nephrology is first laid out and then related to the clinical situation. In the opening chapter on renal anatomy for example, the role of papillary morphology in the potential for renal scarring with vesicoureteric reflux is discussed. Generally symptomatic features of problems are clearly described and a logical approach to investigation and management delineated. The discussion of urinary obstruction and chronic renal failure are classic examples. A lucid explanation of the difficult subject of tubular disease makes the subject seem simple, but on occasions one is left to construct a sequence of investigations where a suggested course of action might be helpful. The sections on drugs in renal disease contain a wealth of information, and other chapters fill in occasional gaps, for example antibiotic drugs for use in dialysis fluid.

To find fault with the book is to be picky as when I wondered if colony counts of $> 10^5$ /ml might be just as acceptable as 10^6 /ml for most physicians. There is perhaps a tendency to overlook some points of management which are routine to

nephrologists but not to junior medical doctors. The use and dosage of diuretics in nephrotic syndrome comes to mind and the lack of consideration of the psychosocial aspects of chronic renal disease is possibly another example. I hope the book is produced in paperback to ensure the wider readership it deserves.

MAURICE SAVAGE

The Best of the Whole Paediatrician Catalogues I-III. By J A McMillan, F A Oski, J A Stockman III, P I Nieburg. Pp 580: £22.75 paperback. W B Saunders, 1985.

It is difficult to fit this book into a category; it is certainly not a comprehensive textbook nor yet a monograph. It does not correspond to the usual pattern of a series of reviews. Perhaps the closest analogy is with a book such as the *Bedside Guardian* with a miscellany of brief articles of varying length, style, and subject matter.

Although a glance at the contents indicates a fairly orthodox list of paediatric chapter headings, the selection of topics covered in each chapter is not comprehensive and represents, as indicated in the introduction, a collection of those entries from Volumes I, II, and III of *The Whole Paediatrician Catalog* which were felt to be most useful and most difficult to find in other sources of reference.

Many subjects are covered, some briefly and some more comprehensively. Subjects range from an extremely useful and brief guide to differential diagnosis of common haemoglobinopathies to how best to advise a child on the choice of a frisbee. In general the articles are characterised by their practical nature and their utility to the practising paediatrician. Although in many instances they reflect North American practice, they contain much useful information and advice for all paediatricians. The authors make extensive and very appropriate use of diagnostic flow charts and of algorithms. Although many of the entries seem brief, their factual content is high.

This is a book which sets out to entertain as well as to inform. It is larded with many quotations that are both appropriate and amusing and many paediatricians will be happy to plagiarise it for lectures and probably after dinner speeches. What is the most appropriate place for this publication? On reading it I have learned a great deal. While it would not be out of place in a paediatric library, perhaps it would be

found most appropriately on the desk or at the bedside of the practical clinician. If one seeks immediate and concise advice on the practical management of a clinical problem he may or may not find the subject covered in this volume. If, however, guidance is found, it will be brief and of considerable practical value. Certainly as a book to dip into in brief periods over coffee, between or even, in fact, during telephone calls, it will give much information and pleasure.

J SYDNEY

Congenital Heart Surgery. Current Techniques and Controversies. By A L Moulton. Pp 347: £95.00 hardback. Butterworths, 1985.

The book seems to be a compilation of papers presented at a paediatric cardiac surgical conference—the dates, venue, and nature of which are not stated. Six major groups of congenital cardiac malformations are discussed in a total of 39 chapters, each by an undisputed world authority and a five-chapter section deals with techniques of perfusion and hypothermia. The following malformations are covered: transposition of the great arteries, coarctation of the aorta with ventricular septal defect, truncus arteriosus, atrioventricular septal defect, pulmonary atresia with intact ventricular septum, and tricuspid atresia/univentricular heart. Most of the sections have a 'discussion' chapter which is a transcript of questions and answers.

Many of the authors discuss surgical techniques in some detail which might be of some interest to those surgeons who have not read the already published descriptions. The less detailed discussions outlining the principles of the operations may be of some value to paediatric cardiologists. The chapters vary considerably in their scientific content and discuss value. The best sections are those which consider transposition of the great arteries, truncus arteriosus, and pulmonary atresia. They provide the reader with a useful review of the advantages and limitations of the various operations available and their indications. The 'discussion' chapter on atrioventricular septal defects is the best part of that section, bringing the problems into a truer perspective than each of the other chapters taken either separately or together. In this section, as in others, the surgeons have ignored the attempts by the morphologists to introduce newer terminology.