deals specifically with urinary diversion and undiversion. The complications of 'medical' procedures—for example, percutaneous renal biopsy and suprapubic aspiration—are considered as well as those of formal surgical operations. The last two chapters cover orthopaedic surgery and neurosurgery, the latter benefiting from an excellent section on cerebrospinal fluid shunt malfunction.

Dr Kassner has performed a valuable service for clinicians in paediatric specialties by drawing together a vast amount of relevant but often inaccessible information. Every paediatric surgeon and radiologist should have access to this book—as should every paediatrician who ever refers a child for specialised surgery.

D F M THOMAS

Recent Advances in Perinatal Medicine. Vol 2. Edited by M L Chiswick. Pp 210; £24.00 hardback. Churchill Livingstone, 1985.

The field of perinatal medicine continues to advance at such a pace, and on such a broad front, that the regular appearance of a book such as this one represents the only hope that most of us have of keeping up to date. Malcolm Chiswick has I think produced a very well balanced second volume, with 10 chapters ranging from early fetal life to the preschool years.

The first chapter is about fetoscopy; its authors are experienced with the technique and it is helpful to have their current appraisal of its place in prenatal diagnosis. The second chapter concerns the obstetric dilemmas presented by preterm labour, and it is excellent for its critical approach to the published works. The third chapter discusses the controversial and confused subject of the use of beta receptor agonists to prevent preterm labour. The fourth chapter deals with the effects of maternal systemic lupus erythematosus, thrombocytopenia, myasthenia gravis, and Graves'

disease on the fetus and newborn; it is usefully orientated towards the management of these difficult conditions. Chapter five appraises the role of hormones and peptide growth factors in the control of fetal growth, and chapter six continues the growth theme with a look at growth in the preterm infant, the nutritional requirements for it and how these can be met in practice. The seventh chapter is an objective look at the 'bonding' phenomenon. Chapter eight concerns the retinopathy of prematurity, with a strong emphasis on vitamin E treatment. Chapter nine addresses the vital question of how we might prevent intraventricular haemorrhage, and the final chapter, which is one of the best, is about neurodevelopmental outcome among low birthweight infants.

The standard of writing is good throughout, and most chapters cite about one hundred references. The book should be regarded as a 'set book' for all involved in the perinatal field.

P R F DEAR

Child Health Surveillance. Council of Europe, Strasbourg 1985. Pp 146: paperback.

This book is produced by a select committee of experts on child health surveillance from 10 European countries. Its main terms of reference were to describe in detail the programmes in operation in Europe, to identify the guidance issued to bodies undertaking child health surveillance, and to report on research undertaken in Europe to evaluate surveillance programmes. There are five main sections to the report: General Considerations, Content of Child Health Surveillance, Services and Personnel, Education for Health, and Research and Evaluation.

The first section is by far the best. Although contributing nothing new, it provides a forceful and well argued account of the policies underlying child health surveillance.

The second section on the content of surveillance is rightly the longest in the book. I, however, find it confusing in that it mixes elements of theory and practice, idealism and personal opinion. Quite a number of the recommendations would differ from currently accepted practice in this country. For example, hearing testing is not recommended until 9 months, which would generally be regarded as too late; it is suggested that a cover test for squint should be carried out by nursing staff, though many would find this a most difficult clinical test. There is an emphasis on repetitive general examination by doctors at more frequent intervals than is currently practised in most districts. Although the roles of parents and community nurses are acknowledged, the development of their contribution towards surveillance is not given sufficient prominence. Overall, the practice of child health surveillance in the United Kingdom has developed somewhat beyond the description given in this section.

The third section gives proper prominence to the need for interdisciplinary work involving health, education, and social services, and discusses some of the difficulties in following this goal.

The fourth section expands the theme of education for health as an integral part of policy.

The fifth section highlights the requirements for good data collection to establish needs and to follow changing patterns. Screening programmes should be carefully evaluated to establish their validity.

An appendix summarises the format and some of the results from the major British cohort studies.

Overall, the book is rich in terms of general principles but disappointing in the details of practice. Perhaps this is inevitable in any attempt to synthesise a single set of recommendations from a series of countries whose systems of surveillance must vary quite widely.

LEON POLNAY