

Much of the advice about clinical management is based on current practice at the Hospital for Sick Children in London. Inevitably, some of the advice is dogmatic, but the dogma obviously works in the hands of the authors. Anaesthetists in training will be grateful for the clear guidelines set down but established anaesthetists will realise that alternative approaches are possible.

The book is well produced and I could not find evidence of misprinting or frank errors. Contradictions in a two author book should be few and indeed this is the case. (There does appear to be a conflict about whether the dead space/tidal volume ratio is different in the neonate than in the adult or older child).

Despite the increased price this book is nevertheless good value for money.

L G GARDNER

**Growth disorders in infants, children and adolescents.** By M L Rallison. Pp 476: £35.00 hardback. John Wiley and Sons, 1986.

This is a single author textbook on growth by Professor Rallison and obviously reflects a long period of clinical practice in paediatric growth and endocrinology consultation.

The chapters are organised in a sequential manner starting with chapters on the nature of growth followed by one on fetal growth and development. The next three chapters detail normal growth in infancy, childhood, and adolescence and are followed by a useful chapter with details of growth measurement, growth charts, a discussion on skeletal maturation, and finally prediction of mature height.

The remaining six chapters follow a similar pattern with a clinical approach to growth disorders likely to be met at different times in a child's life. The clinical approach is continued in the final two chapters in dealing with problems of failure to thrive, obesity, and the psychological problems associated with growth disorders in children.

In recent years there has been an increased interest in growth and emphasis given to its importance in assessing the wellbeing of a child. I think that this book does make a very useful contribution in this area and that it will appeal to many groups of medical and paramedical personnel.

The later chapters can be consulted for individual growth problems in childhood, and the earlier chapters should appeal to

the doctor seeking a more detailed understanding of the principles underlying growth. The book is well referenced and reasonably up to date—for example, mentioning the problems with growth hormone treatment in 1985 that led to the withdrawal of pituitary derived growth hormone.

The book contains some of the minor irritations often seen in books from North America. These include non-use of SI units, the use of unusual drug names and initials for studies such as CBC UA, and chemistry panel. In addition, the various tables in the appendix will not be used greatly in this country, but perhaps the appendix could have included some information on the SI equivalents for the various units noted in the text.

Despite these minor criticisms, I feel sure that the book will find a useful place in many libraries, but other similar publications from this country would probably be bought in preference by individuals.

C S SMITH

**Causation of Cardiovascular Risk Factors in Children: Perspectives on Cardiovascular Risk in Early Life.** Edited by G S Berenson. Pp 428: \$76.50 hardback.

This book, based on the Bogalusa study, provides essential information for a debate on the issue of vascular disease prevention in early life. Topics include the evolution of risk factors in early life, the evidence for atherosclerotic disease in children and young adults and the relation of these to risk factors, tracking of cardiovascular disease risk factors in school age children, the inter-relations of coronary artery disease risk factors, biological determinants of serum lipoprotein concentrations, carbohydrate metabolism, the determinants of blood pressure in children, body composition, particularly obesity, and a chapter on behaviour and its relation to cardiovascular disease risk. The role of diet and genetic factors determining the occurrence of coronary artery disease is discussed. It emerges that when two population groups are compared environmental factors seem paramount, but when studies are made on intrapopulation differences the environment factor seems very much smaller, thus indicating that given a particular level of environmental variation it is genetic factors that seem to determine which individuals will suffer.

Despite the extensive work at Bogalusa

and elsewhere, the controversy as to whether irreversible arteriosclerosis begins in childhood or whether restriction of fats in the diets of young children will have any appreciable effect on later prevalence of arteriosclerosis remains unresolved. It is, for example, still unclear whether the fatty streaking that begins about the age of 10 years inevitably gives rise to fibrous plaque during early adult life.

Perhaps the most salutary single statement comes in Plate One, where the coronary arteries of a 23 year old, who died in an automobile accident, are shown with considerable atherosclerosis. He had been a member of the Bogalusa heart study and all the usual determinants of coronary artery disease were normal. In high school he had become a persistent smoker of (Marlboro) cigarettes.

These are the sort of plums that can be pulled out of the pudding created by sentences such as 'clinical and laboratory markers ultimately provide significant links to pathological changes in the cardiovascular system associated with overt disease.'

This is a densely written book containing much detailed discussion most likely to be of interest to the epidemiologist, clinical nutritionist, paediatrician with a special interest in nutrition and preventive medicine, and cardiologists. It should certainly be in all serious paediatric libraries.

L S MITZ

**Chronically ill children with their families.** By N Hobbs, J M Perrin, H T Treys. Pp 406: £34.00 hardback. Jossey-Bass, 1986.

Between 1980 and 1985, this team from Vanderbilt University coordinated discussion and review of the public policies affecting chronically ill children throughout the United States. The detailed findings are published separately, allowing this book, subtitled, 'problems, prospects, and proposals from the Vanderbilt study' to offer an overview of the issues involved.

This book is written for all concerned with the welfare of chronically ill children. The 12 chapters present a comprehensive analysis of the epidemiology of chronic illness, and its reciprocal effects on children, families, and communities, in social, educational, and moral terms. After discussing various options the book concludes with a call to strengthen community resources, reverse the trend towards centralised medical care, and increase public funding to provide essential paramedical