Book reviews

Textbook of Neonatology. Edited by N R C Robertson. Pp 907: £90.00 hardback. Churchill Livingstone, 1986.

Do not confuse this book with Dr Robertson's pocket manual of neonatal intensive care; this one is a large multi-author work on the newborn that compares favourably with the big American books, such as Shaffer's 'Disease of the newborn' or G Avery's 'Neonatology'. Without wishing to appear chauvinistic, at last we have a major British book covering the whole of neonatal paediatrics as practised in this country. At least it's mainly British, with 42 of the 62 contributors coming from the United Kingdom, only 12 from North America, with four from Australia and four from mainland Europe. Although I have a high regard for American neonatology I found Dr Robertson's book far more relevant to our own beliefs and practices.

The first of the books' eight sections has five chapters on general aspects of neonatology, such as epidemiology, psychology, ethics, follow up, and death. The next section is on obstetrics for the neonatologist and section three deals briefly with embryology and fetal growth. General neonatal care in section four covers examination of the newborn, temperature control, all types of feeding, pharmacology, and resuscitation. There then follows the main body of the book in section five with 14 chapters on all aspects of disorders of the newborn described mainly by organ systems.

Some chapters such as the one on neurological disorders, are further subdivided into as many as eight parts. This section is comprehensive and well balanced, mainly relating to everyday clinical practice but also providing useful reference to the less common disorders. The remainder deals with organisation, procedures, and the usual appendices of normal values, etc. The book is produced to a high standard with clear layout, many subheadings, tables, and diagrams. There are plenty of black and white photos and some in colour. The x rays and ultrasound scans, which so often come out poorly in print, have reproduced well. Each chapter has a sizeable list of references. At £90 it may be beyond the pocket of many junior staff, but I can certainly recommend it to all

paediatricians working with the newborn, and I am sure every neonatal unit should have a copy.

BRIAN SPIEDEL

Respiratory Disorders in the Newborn. Current Reviews in Paediatrics. By V Y H Yu. Pp 156: £19.00 hardback. Churchill Livingstone, 1986.

This excellent book is the latest in the series 'Current reviews in paediatrics' under the overall editorship of Dr Tim Chambers and Professor A Green.

The single author format allows the very complex subject of respiratory disorders in the newborn to be covered in a small but detailed book with appropriate cross references and very little repetition. Each subject is covered in a short, concise, but very clear description, usually covering what is known of predisposing factors, pathophysiology, and prevention as well as acute and chronic management and long term outcome. Each section is extremely well referenced and in general the author manages to define clearly those statements that are based on objective studies or published data from those statements that reflect his own considerable clinical experience but may not yet have been subjected to detailed scientific scrutiny.

The descriptions of anatomic and physiologic development of the lung and the respiratory system in general are short enough to be read by the interested resident in neonatal medicine but detailed enough and sufficiently well referenced to provide an appropriate guide to further reading. There follow sections on perinatal asphyxia, aspiration syndrome, hyaline membrane disease, pneumonia, pulmonary oedema, pulmonary air leak, pulmonary hypertension, chronic lung disorders, apnoeic attacks, and congenital anomalies of the respiratory system. In each of these chapters the same format is followed with an extraordinary amount of information being crammed into very concise descriptions of the various conditions being covered. As for the sections on physiology and anatomy, all the clinical sections are extremely well referenced and the reader is left in no doubt about which aspects of care are standard and widely applied and which are perhaps slightly more idiosyncratic.

If there is any real criticism of this book it is that relatively little attention is given to experimental or unconventional approaches to management, which might be of value to the audience for whom this book is intended as it is often helpful to know which alternative approaches have been tried and what results, if any, are available.

In summary, this book should prove of great value to both medical and nursing staff involved in the care of newborn infants. It is concise enough to be read throughout by the more highly motivated residents but is detailed enough to provide a useful reference book and as such find a place on the shelves of most special and intensive care baby units.

P J FLEMING

Care of the Child with Diabetes. Edited by J D Baum and A L Kinmouth. Pp 288: £24.00 hardback. Churchill Livingstone, 1986.

This sets out to be 'both a text book and a practical manual of diabetic care'. It succeeds better as a textbook. In its success, however, it shows a highly professional multidisciplinary approach; an exemplary model for paediatric diabetic care in the 1980s. Anyone having the care of diabetic children should consult a copy, and that includes parents. Can we hope that in the second edition the patient's voice will be heard verbatim and not only through his parents?

J H KEEN

Standards in Pediatric Orthopaedics. Tables, Charts and Graphs Illustrating Growth. Edited by Robert N Hensinger. Pp 403: \$65.50 hardback. Raven Press, 1986.

This is a book of graphs, tables, and diagrams covering a wide range of aspects of growth from the fetus to the fully grown. It is designed primarily for those interested in paediatric orthopaedics, as the title implies, and has sections on spine and skull, hip and pelvis, upper extremity, hand, lower extremity, and foot. These include comprehensive data on bone sizes,

shapes, changes, and relations. There are also chapters on gait, biomechanics, growth, and maturation in more general terms, including puberty and neuromuscular function. This last comprises mental development as well as physiological development of strength and skill. This is a massive compilation of over 400 high quality illustrations but with the minimum of description. The material is mostly presented directly from original publications of many authors and is as up to date as possible.

When I first opened this book I expected to find it invaluable. Sadly, this did not prove to be the case. The number of contributions is so great that on any particular subject it is difficult to know which one to select, and the lack of textual description makes many areas difficult for the non-orthopaedic specialist to understand. Inevitably, there is little consistency in the format as the material comes directly from so many sources. There is little to which I, as a paediatrician with a special interest in growth, would have cause to refer. The last chapter is useful, including such familiar data as Apgar, Dubowitz, Bailey, and Denver scoring. There are also occasional invaluable oddments within the book, such as standards for growth of children with achondroplasia and other bone dysplasias and performance standards of strength and skill of growing children. There are excellent illustrations of normal gait, and the abnormal progression in Duchenne dystrophy. Though much of the rest is of interest, however, there is little of direct clinical application. Of course, not being American, I found the lack of reference to non-American standards disappointing. In this massive accumulation of data I found only one group derived from Tanner. This was the velocity standards for height and weight. Yet the distance standards for all body measurements, the criteria for pubertal rating, skeletal age

assessment methods, prediction of adult height, etc, included few of those with which we in Europe are familiar and accept as appropriate.

Of course, this book has not been written for the British paediatrician! For those for whom it is primarily intended, American orthopaedic surgeons, it may be excellent, but I am in awe of their understanding of such a complex specialty.

J M H BUCKLER

Malformation in Children from One to Seven Years. A report from the collaborative perinatal project. By N C Myrianthopoulos. Pp 250: £55.00 hardback. Alan R Liss Inc, 1986.

This is a study of 47 775 singletons who were followed through the ages of 1 to 7 years to describe the types and frequencies of major and minor malformations observed during that period. The malformations are analysed by system, single, and multiple malformations and by race and sex. There is so much information here it is a bit like being asked to review a telephone directory. Impressive and indispensable for those really interested in the subject, but dispensable for most paediatricians.

R M WINTER

The Problem Knee—Diagnosis and Management in the Younger Patient. By M F Macnicol. Pp 184: £19.50 hardback. Heinemann, 1986.

The author has aimed his book at a wide readership, which includes physiotherapists, coaches, family doctors, and accident officers. He has emphasised the importance of accurate diagnosis and given general guidance on operative treatment. With the number of books already available on

the knee it seemed at first sight unlikely that there was a place for yet another one. By the clear definition of his objectives and emphasis on overall management, however, Mr Macnicol has produced an interesting and useful short book. It provides up to date information on the present day treatment of common problems in the knee. There is a systematic description starting from mechanisms and presentation of injuries to techniques involved in the rehabilitation of the damaged knee. The section on the diagnosis of the various ligamentous injuries is particularly clear and well illustrated. Methods of investigation are discussed in some detail and include examples of computed axial tomography and images produced with nuclear magnetic resonance. Although the main bulk of the text is devoted to injuries, there is a useful chapter on non-traumatic conditions.

There is no doubt that this book fills a gap. It is very likely to be popular with orthopaedic residents and registrars as well as the audience for which it is intended.

LESLIE KLENERMAN

Cranial Computed Tomography in Infants and Children. By E N Faerber. Pp 237: £16.00 hardback. Blackwell Scientific, 1986.

This book is not solely an atlas of cranial computed tomography; there is a good deal of explanatory text. Scanning techniques are clearly described and the section on normal anatomy is excellent. The book is comprehensive, sometimes at the expense of detail on the more common conditions. The majority of illustrations are clear, but some are far too dark to see any detail. On the whole I found this book a very useful guide. It is well indexed and the references are up to date.

S H GREEN