yet he provides a discursive exposition of the whole subject from basic principles to details of latest DNA technology. He succeeds in appealing to his intended audience of practising clinicians. The first 10 chapters are general, covering mendelian and non-mendelian disorders, chromosome anomalies, dysmorphology, carrier detection, prenatal diagnosis and the organisation of a genetic counselling clinic. The section on X linked disorders conveys its complexity and will convince readers of the necessity for clinical geneticists!

The second half of the book covers 'specific organ systems' with chapters which include oral and craniofacial disorders, deafness, environmental hazards, genetic risks in cancer, in addition to predictable topics. Here there is a tendency to repeat some information from the early chapters, and much space is given to clinical description rather than genetics per se. Many non-genetic conditions are briefly included. There is a comprehensive index and a list of lay societies involved in inheritable diseases. There are some excellent tables but these could have been used much more extensively in the organ system section where many lines of text convey little information and abbreviations are not much employed.

The style is fluent and persuasive. Professor Harper displays clear empathy with his audience, shining through as a physician whose appreciation of the human aspects of his subject is paramount and to which his knowledge is subjugated. Anecdotes, imperatives, and aphorisms appear regularly, rendering the reading most enjoyable and inviting us to match both his enthusiasm and professional rigour. His concluding chapter touches on eugenics and looks to the future. The book is practical, informative, and stimulating—highly recommended.

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'The dramatic advances in endocrinology . . . form . . . an extraordinary chapter in the history of science and medicine. The profound effect . . . on paediatric endocrinology . . . is of special interest' to paediatricians. The words are those of Dr Mel Grumbach who provides the forward to this comprehensive resource text book.

There are 31 contributing authors, 19 based in the United Kingdom and the remainder originating from Europe or the United States reflecting the editor's affiliations with the European Society for Paediatric Endocrinology and the Lawson Wilkins Society.

A number of chapters by the same authors as the 1981 edition have required little revision but others are comprehensively updated and retain their excellence, such as chapters on intersex (MO Savage), the short child (JM Parkin), the neurohypophysis (J Perheentupa), adrenal deficiency and excess (M Forest). Several chapters with similar subject headings to the first edition are written by different authors, for instance the first chapter on fetal growth (DJ Hill and RDG Milner) provides a fascinating review of paracrinology, the tissue signals responsible for early embryological growth and later endocrine development.

The Middlesex approach to investigation, description, and management of short stature is thoroughly aired in chapters on normal growth and endocrine control and the management of short stature. Many readers hoping for practical advice will find these parts of the text somewhat theoretical, unduly mathematical, and at times unconvincing. The Middlesex authors redeem themselves with excellent accounts of puberty and its disorders.

Other slight disappointments were the chapters on gynaecology (lack of paediatric orientation with inappropriate therapies) and the thyroid gland (no mention of the consequences of late treatment of congenital hypothyroidism or the spectacularly improved prognosis after neonatal screening).

Further on in the book, however, there are useful chapters on hypothalamic hormones (A Grossman), the adrenal cortex (J Honour), and adrenal hyperplasia (M New and P W Speiser). There is an outstanding account of calcium disorders (K Kruse) and much sound scholarship and practical advice on diabetes mellitus (B Weber and F Bonnici).

The entirely new section on imaging (computed tomography, nuclear magnetic resonance, and ultrasound) is successful except that several of the anatomical descriptions and figures would have benefited from additional line diagrams, arrows, and landmarks. Normal laboratory values and endocrine function tests (IA Hughes) are available in abundance.

This is, therefore, a provocatively different second edition which complements the first. It is for paediatricians and endocrinologists but they might be surprised by a lack of print quality and many typographical errors in a book of such horrendous price. It is disheartening that 'Next week' produces its 'directory' of 474 superbly printed colour pages for sale at £3 when costs individuals or libraries £125 to buy this important text book.

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This book will be very popular for all those at the sharp end of paediatrics, whether they are working in hospital, the community, or general practice. There is an unusual breadth and choice of subjects, described in a fact-filled didactic way, and these cover most of the common and often difficult decisions that have to be made.

As might be expected from these authors, there is fairly detailed discussion on growth, development, and immunisation including good advice on AIDS. The accompanying charts and diagrams are well selected and highly relevant. Those with a passion for flow charts will not be disappointed, the excellent one on resuscitation of the newborn will no doubt be in the pocket of most new neonatal housemen, unless already taken from the authors' original article. The more convoluted flowchart on the collapse of the child is harder work but contains a mass of information.

The chapter on nutrition and fluids is particularly clear and easy access to all the usual formulae will be welcomed. Child abuse is dealt with in a wise way, going beyond the usual description of injuries and giving good advice on case conferences, reports, procedures, and courts.

The chapter on practical procedures is clearly written by someone still at the height of his technical skills and will be invaluable to all new housemen.

It is good to see brief but informative chapters on death, paramedical services, and immigrant groups.

This book is more than a vade mecum but would not see someone through.