material is that of a good review article. There is little clinical material and I think it would be difficult for a non-clinician to acquire enough information about conditions and problems to satisfy his curiosity. Equally the new clinical research fellow embarking on a two year project in say, pulmonary hypertension or free radical scavengers would obviously need much more information than can be offered here, although the relevant chapters would make a good start. The quality was excellent and the overall style and feel of the book is very reminiscent of my much loved (sadly long out of print) copy of *Scientific Foundations of Paediatrics* edited by Davis and Dobbing. This is not a book of diagnosis, treatment and investigation, but gathers together in one place useful information of the type usually presented in the introductory chapters of large single system textbooks. The major competitor currently in print has to be *Fetal and Neonatal Physiology* edited by Polin and Fox, published in two volumes at a cost of £180. The emphasis of Polin and Fox is more physiological, with more depth and an exhaustive bibliography. At half the price Gluckman and Heymann offers good value, although few individual clinicians will want or need to buy this book many would benefit from access to it and the quality of the contributions more than justifies its purchase for the department library.

JANET M RENNIE
Director of neonatal services

Immunology of Gastrointestinal Disease.

Edited by T T MacDonald. Series editor Professor Keith Whaley. (Pp 307; £85 hardback.) Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1992. ISBN 0-7923-8961-1. (Immunology and Medicine series.)

This brightly yellow covered book provides interesting reading with chapters ranging from basics of gastrointestinal immunology to authoritative state of the art reviews on selected topics of immunological aspects of gastrointestinal disease. It provides at times too specialised information on in vitro assays of immunological mediated intestinal damage for the interested but non-specialised clinician without addressing treatment aspects in any depth.

Generally, however, the immunological bases of diseases are very well discussed. Coeliac disease is covered as a review in great depth and provides up to date information with 124 references. Theories relating to the pathogenesis of coeliac disease are rather listed than discussed in a critical analysis. The chapter on gastrointestinal food allergy is different in style and provides information that could also be found in up to date textbooks. The chapter on the immunology of intractable diarrhoea of infancy and its relationship to immunodeficiencies gives an interesting up to date account of the attempts to identify and classify subgroups of children based on genetic, autoimmune, and immunodeficiency features. The discussion is focused on a single (Paris) centre experience. The immunology of intestinal transplantation in humans and animals, and discussion of intestinal graft-versus-host disease are highly informative and enjoyable but also require some specialist knowledge for the full appreciation. The table on the state of small intestinal bowel transplantation in humans since the

introduction of cyclosporin is particularly informative for the clinician (with or without potential candidates for a gut transplant under his/her care!) The chapters on gastrointestinal immunological responses during HIV infection, infection with enterotoxin producing bacteria and giardia are informative (especially the HIV chapter) and provide a good source of current knowledge.

What about the basics of gastrointestinal immunology? The chapters dealing with cells and tissues of the gut in health and during inflammatory bowel disease and detailing the molecular basis of cell migration are compelling. The chapter on intestinal permeation of molecules in health and disease gives a balanced up to date review on the relationship between intestinal diseases and their effects on gut permeability in humans and experimental animals and is as such of more direct interest to the practising clinician exposed to these tests.

Did I enjoy the book? Yes, it is an excellent, although expensive (£85) source of information for interested paediatricians. I believe, however, it is a must for libraries of departments working in this field. It would have been even better if the editing process could have been as tight as necessary in a multi-author book and if the chapters had followed a more logical sequence.

STEPHAN STROBEL
Reader in paediatric immunology

Principles and Practice of Pediatric Oncology.

2nd Ed. Edited by Philip A Pizzo and David G Poplack. (Pp 1350; £165 hardback.) JB Lippincott Company, 1993. ISBN 0-397-51207-4.

'When they sent me to a paediatric oncologist I did not know what a paediatric oncologist did. I'd never heard of the word before.' This is a parent's view expressed in this book which physicians and paramedical staff at least need now not share. Drs Pizzo and Poplack have produced a second edition of their comprehensive text book after only four years. Who actually wants to read 1350 pages about a rare subject? Access to this book is, in fact, essential for those in training in paediatric oncology and also for those who may think they have arrived but still have much to learn. It provides a detailed, up to date reference text for doctors, nurses, and paramedical staff working in the field. While its expense may be prohibitive for the individual, access through a paediatric oncology unit or library should be possible.

There is an extensive range of subjects covered in the book. Topics range from cancer cell biology and tumour immunology to the management of nausea and vomiting, nursing care in paediatric oncology, and terminal care. Topics also include the use of recombinant cytokines, growth factors and 'novel molecular approaches' to treatment, and rehabilitation of the child with cancer and nutritional supportive care. The text is clear and well presented, with appropriate diagrams and several excellent illustrations. Each chapter is fully referenced including many key references from within the last 12 months.

A large part of the book quite appropriately is devoted to the management of individual childhood malignancies. The diagnosis and clinical presentation of many of the disorders are clearly described. However, while the principles of treatment are universal, local

practice relating to the management of the majority of malignant conditions is not. The book reflects American practice in the treatment of childhood malignancies (there are 125 contributors of which all but seven are from the US or Canada) and details of the protocol and treatment regimens used for many of the conditions would need to be sought elsewhere by the European trainee.

This new edition explores more fully than the last the important issues of psychosocial problems arising as a result of a diagnosis of cancer during childhood. There are new chapters added that address advances in biological and molecular approaches to the diagnosis and treatment of children with cancer, along with an interesting chapter that discusses what the caregiver can learn from the child. Whether 38 pages listing centres for the treatment of childhood cancer and charitable organisations significantly adds to the quality of the book is debatable.

This is the most comprehensive review of the subject of paediatric oncology available. It is not perfect – but I would not be without it.

M E M JENNEY
Consultant paediatric oncologist

Pediatric Pharmacology and Therapeutics. 2nd Ed. Edited by Ingeborg C Radde and Stuart M MacLeod. (Pp 637; £54 hardback.) Mosby Year Book, 1993. ISBN 1-55664-368-3.

The Lord hath created medicines out of the earth;
And he that is wise will not abhor them
(*Ecclesiasticus* 38:3)

The 40 wise contributors to this excellent book are mainly associated with the Hospital For Sick Children in Toronto, and together with the editors have produced a readable and comprehensive text well illustrated with tables and figures. The book is divided into three sections, the first part on principles in pharmacology dealing (among other subjects) with drug transport, absorption, protein binding, renal elimination, and receptors. This provides a good introduction to the 'science' of pharmacology. Section two is devoted to clinical pharmacokinetics, drug disposition and action, monitoring, and complications. The final section accounting for around two thirds of the entire volume, includes chapters related to specific topics (for example, pain, hypertension, role of the placenta) or the pharmacology of particular organ systems (for example, cardiovascular pharmacology, drug treatment in gastrointestinal disease). Each chapter is very well referenced, citing papers published as recently 1991, and the reader is often directed to review articles for more complete discussion of a subject. These chapters provide much detailed information and a good general overview of the topic covered; the index appeared to be a comprehensive guide to the contents.

The world population of children under 16 years of age will be around 3 billion by the year 2000. This book is therefore a timely contribution to an aspect of medical practice which is often dealt with inadequately in standard textbooks of paediatrics. Although the editors anticipate that the increasing emphasis on a population view of health will come to have a bearing on drug treatment, there is perhaps relatively little in this book on epidemiology, economics, and quality of life analysis. I would, however, highly recom-

mend it to all those caring for sick children as an informative and practical text which should be bought for libraries and would also be a useful resource on the paediatric ward.

JOHN PUNTIS
Consultant paediatrician

A Guide to the Practice of Paediatric Endocrinology. By Charles G D Brook. (Pp 181; £25 hardback.) Cambridge University Press, 1993. ISBN 0-521-43179-4.

This short and eminently readable monograph from the prolific Professor Brook is a welcome update on his original book of 1978. There are nine concise 'state of the art' chapters with a tenth on practical matters. No references are

given and there is only a small bibliography.

Inevitably in a book of this kind there are some omissions. The measurement of thyroid stimulating hormone receptor antibodies is not detailed in the laboratory section, while growth is not mentioned in the chapter on diabetes. Some eccentric views are expressed (for example, the academic benefits of hypothyroidism and the social woes of tall stature in adulthood!) and there are some irritations (much of the text on practical matters at the end could be usefully incorporated into the previous chapters). However, these drawbacks are more than outweighed by the author's clear prose, vast clinical experience, and sheer common sense. As one would expect, the chapters on growth, puberty, and the adrenal gland are excellent. The thyroid section has some radical and

sound advice on the management of both hypothyroidism and thyrotoxicosis which will be of particular value to both general paediatricians and paediatric endocrinologists. The section on diabetes is a little disappointing with the author perhaps correctly suggesting a charge of therapeutic nihilism against himself, and scant coverage of some of the more innovative aspects of diabetic management.

This book should be read and enjoyed by all practising paediatricians, while junior doctors studying for the DCH and MRCP will enjoy the easy access to current paediatric endocrinology. In this age of multiauthor tomes this entertaining and digestible book reasserts the enduring value of the monograph.

MALCOLM DONALDSON
Senior lecturer in child health