are authorities few are teachers. There seems to be no paediatric equivalent to John West, for example, who is able to describe pulmonary physiology and pathophysiology in simple language with simple drawings. Anyone who hopes to understand the difference between static and dynamic lung compliance by reading this book will be disappointed. Lists leave a lot to be desired. Often they look as if they have been included simply to break the text. Items are given the same weight and the text has to be read very carefully to understand the list. Perhaps that is reason enough for including them. Would it not be better to use more modern presentations of information such as ‘key points’ charts? An example of a list in this book that could be truly misleading is one entitled ‘wheezing in the otherwise healthy child’ which includes anaemia and hyperthermia. I was unable to relate these to wheeze and the text gave me no help. Tables and drawings have sometimes been taken from adult literature. There is one borrowed illustration in which the model is an adult female and on the opposite page is a table that lists values of immunoglobulin subclasses in smokers and nonsmokers.

It is possible that the time has come to reconsider the place of the comprehensive reference book? Perhaps a series of small volumes, something like an encyclopedia, would be more practical for an edition easier to keep up to date. More time could be given to quality as well as quantity. Such books would greatly benefit from professional advice about the design of tables, graphs, and so on. Better presentation would then add interest to information.

Hilman costs £148. I am glad I was asked to review it.

SHEILA MCKENZIE Consultant paediatrician


This book is aimed at general paediatricians and, particularly in its early chapters, is orientated towards practical management of children with suspected heart disease. The problem orientated chapters deal with physical examination, chest radiography, electrocardiography, basic echocardiography, cyanotic heart disease, heart failure, murmurs, chest pains, and syncope and are followed by more specific chapters, for example on rheumatic fever, rhythm abnormalities, cardiomyopathies, Kawasaki syndrome, endocarditis, genetics of heart disease, transplantation and cardiac surgery, along with chapters on ‘integrated cardiovascular health promotion in childhood’ and ‘lifestyle issues’.

The first chapter gives an introduction to cardiac anatomy with line drawings that in some cases are poorly reproduced and are copied from a previous (14 year old) publication. The descriptions of heart sounds and of physical examination include some of the author’s personal ideas which would not be universally accepted – for example that the first sound is due ‘mainly to papillary muscle contraction’ and the recommendations that foot pulses should be palpated into the femoral pulses and that auscultation should begin with the bell at the second right inter-

space. The chapter on chest radiographs is useful but the quality of illustrations is so poor in some cases that no lung markings can be seen. There is a useful series of electrocardiograms with concise explanations of the abnormalities present. The approach to cyanotic heart disease is sensible overall but it is possible that the lead placement in some cases is listed as a cause of inadequate pulmonary blood flow; it is erroneously stated that the ventricular septal defect in tetralogy of Fallot ‘cannot be small or restrictive’. Eccentricities also creep into the recommendations for treatment. If British paediatricians were to adopt the suggestion to ventilate all babies who are on prostaglandin E, they would have angry cardiologists and a large number of blocked intensive care unit beds filled by unnecessarily ventilated babies! Similarly, the suggestions that there is great value in close monitoring of lactic acid concentrations in duct dependent circulations and that oxygen is contraindicated in such patients are overzealous. The recommendation that babies with total anomalous pulmonary venous drainage should be ventilated only with air is even more extreme. Dopamine is mentioned, but it may not be helpful if it causes rhythm disturbances, amrinone is the only phosphodiesterase inhibitor mentioned, and there is no mention of fluid restriction in the renal ischaemia chapter. What is usually written on more specific aspects of heart disease are on the whole concise, readable, and useful. The chapter on Kawasaki disease is excellent. The sections on health promotion and lifestyle issues contain common sense and is a sensible guide to leading a healthy life along with some advice on pregnancy and contraception in adolescents and adults with congenital heart disease.

The overall approach to heart disease in this book is sensible. However, the quality of illustrations is poor in places, in some instances personal opinion is stated too strongly and some of the recommendations on management do not seem keeping with current practice in Britain, making it difficult to recommend the book as a guide to paediatric practice here in the UK.

JOHN L GIBBS Consultant paediatric cardiologist


This is a good basic book on the practical management of newborn babies, specifically excluding intensive care. It is the 5th edition of Practical Neonatal Paediatrics with a new title. It is not intended as an introduction, but as practical advice for junior medical and nursing staff.

There are particularly good and clear chapters on examination of the newborn, resuscitation and the wealth of helpful hints throughout the book, such as the scoring scheme for risk of infection after prolonged rupture of membranes. Some of the practical information is the sort that tends to get passed down in neonatal units by word of mouth. This book will ensure that such information is accurate.

Because intensive care is excluded, the chapter on small babies is very brief, less than half the length of the one on heart problems.

However, many problems of small babies are adequately covered in other chapters. Practical procedures described include arterial cannulation but not insertion of a chest drain or umbilical artery catheter. Inclusion of these procedures and a more detailed discussion of small babies might have enhanced the range of the book, but the authors have sensibly drawn the line at information which the new senior house officer needs and no more.

Although resuscitation is well covered, the make-up of the teaching of practical problems finds itself out of place in an earlier chapter. I disagreed with advice to send babies with breathing difficulties to the x ray department for better quality of x ray films, and many paediatricians would have made it slightly too big for most pockets I tried. The margins could have been trimmed with some loss of elegance but greater practical benefit.

Despite these minor quibbles, if I knew that my senior house officers had, in the first week or two of their new job, absorbed the knowledge and advice this book contains, I would feel confident that these would be prepared to manage neonatal problems sensibly. The detail is just right for their initial needs but if they have to cope with neonatal intensive care they will also need an additional source of reference. A good starting point for new senior house officers and general practitioner trainees.

J W T BENSON Consultant paediatrician


This book by Klaus and Fanaroff has a house style that sets it apart from other textbooks. This is interpersed with comments highlighted in bold type, from the editors themselves or from one of a group of international experts. These comments may reinforce a view expressed in the text, sometimes adding one or two key references, or on other circumstances they urge caution over an expressed statement or recommendation and occasionally they present an opposing view. Most of the comments are interesting (sometimes more interesting than the adjacent text), some are highly perceptive, a few are gratuitous or even silly. The other feature is inclusion of case reports at the end of each chapter. The authors say that history are given and then a series of questions are asked, inviting the reader to pit his wits against the contributor by suggesting the appropriate course of management. The chapter can then be seen in so many ways, resist turning to the end of each chapter for a quick peak at the questions. The style has the effect of breaking up the text and therefore making it easier to read. It makes this a textbook to be read a chapter at a time, not a reference work where an item can be looked up quickly.

This is the fourth edition of the popular US textbook of newborn intensive care. The first appeared in 1973 when positive pressure ventilation was becoming established as a