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 consulting 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 non-smokers.

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 encyclopaedia, would be more practical for an editor and 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

Pediatric Cardiology. A Problem Oriented Approach. By I Gessner and B Victorica. (Pp 283; £34 hardback.) Harcourt Brace Jovanovitch, 1993. ISBN 0-7216-4564-X.

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 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 instead of 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 also contains inaccuracies: tricuspid atresia 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 not advised as an inotrope as it may cause rhythm disturbances, amrinone is the only phosphodiesterase inhibitor mentioned, and there is no mention of fluid restriction in the treatment of hyponatraemia. The chapters 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 on 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 in 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

Practical Management of the Newborn. 5th Ed. By I M Balfour-Lynn and H B Valman. (Pp 294; £14.95 paperback.) Blackwell Scientific Publications Ltd, 1993. ISBN 0-632-03574-4.

This is a good basic book on the practical management of newborn problems, specifically excluding intensive care. It is the 5th edition of *Practical Neonatal Paediatrics* with a new title. The book is intended as an introduction and as practical advice for junior medical and nursing staff.

There are particularly good and clear chapters on examination of the newborn, resuscitation, and practical procedures, and a 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 management of postasphyxial 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 not agree with the old definition of hypoglycaemia in small babies. The neonatal electrocardiogram is barely mentioned in an otherwise excellent chapter on heart disease. At less than 300 pages this could be a pocket book but the publishers 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 they were well 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 starter for new senior house officers and general practitioner trainees.

J W T BENSON
Consultant paediatrician

Care of the High-Risk Neonate. 4th Ed. Edited by Marshall H Klaus and Avroy A Fanaroff. (Pp 538; £34 hardback.) W B Saunders, 1993. ISBN 0-7216-3709-4.

This book by Klaus and Fanaroff has a house style that sets it apart from other textbooks. The text is interspersed 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. In 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 many of the chapters. A few lines of 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. This is fun, so much so that it is difficult to resist turning to the end of each chapter for a quick peek 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

treatment for respiratory distress in preterm infants but when babies below 28 weeks' gestation did not usually survive. As the specialty has changed and grown, so has the Cleveland textbook. The latest edition has 36 contributors, all but one from the US, and many from Cleveland itself.

The authors have kept the combination of neonatal physiology and practical advice on management which was a successful feature of previous editions. There are 19 chapters, two completely new and the remainder brought up to date. The chapters cover all the important aspects of neonatal care, although one on the dysmorphic infant would be welcome. Those on antenatal and intrapartum care, the physical environment, care of the parents, respiratory problems, and the heart are particularly good. A new chapter on ethical issues in the perinatal period addresses the question 'who makes the decision about forgoing life-sustaining treatment for a patient?' in the light of the 1984 'Baby Doe' law. The answer is the doctors and parents in partnership, taking account of the expected quality of life of the infant, a view most UK paediatricians accept and practise. The other new chapter is on nursing practice in the neonatal intensive care unit. This is excellent, particularly on the topics of light, noise, handling, positioning, and skin care of very immature infants.

Overall the book has an air of authority and the views expressed are usually cautious and sensible. Neonatal intensive care units should add it to their libraries.

NICHOLAS RUTTER
*Reader in child health/honorary
consultant paediatrician*

The Pediatric Spine; Principles and Practice. Vol 1 and 2. Edited by Stuart L Weinstein. (Pp 2092; \$359.50 hardback.) Raven Press, 1993. ISBN 0-7817-0028-0.

The launch of a major new textbook that is obviously going to become a definitive reference book is an exciting event. This magnificent text on the paediatric spine, principles and practice, edited by Stuart Weinstein from Iowa City, can certainly be put in that category.

This book is the only comprehensive text devoted exclusively to the subject of the paediatric spine. It is a multiauthor book and the list of contributors reads like a who's who of spinal surgery. Most of the 126 contributors are drawn from the major spinal centres in the USA but there are other notable contributions from Europe and Asia.

The book is in two volumes with 85 chapters and 1959 pages. It covers the whole range of spinal problems in childhood. The initial chapters deal with the anatomy, biomechanics, patient evaluation and investigation including a very important chapter by Howard King on a subject about which very little has been written, that of back pain in children.

Other topics covered in volume 1 are congenital and developmental abnormalities; trauma; inflammatory and infectious conditions; neoplasms and metabolic diseases. Each chapter is concisely written by an expert in the field and there is an excellent bibliography at the end of each chapter. Diagrams and illustrations are plentiful, well produced, and enhance the text. I particularly enjoyed the chapter on three dimensional analysis of

the scoliotic spine by Jean Dubousset which explains a very difficult concept with great clarity.

Topics of interest to the paediatric neurosurgeon such as Chiari malformations, tethered cord, syringomyelia, and spinal cord tumour are well covered. There are also chapters on neuromuscular diseases, anaesthetic considerations, and neurophysiology that will be of interest to colleagues in these disciplines.

Most of volume 2 is dedicated to surgical approaches and surgical techniques. There are good descriptions of the more commonly used instrumentation systems including Harrington, Luque, TSRH, Isola, CD, and Zielke. These chapters are particularly well illustrated and provide a much better description of the various surgical techniques involved than many books devoted entirely to operative surgery.

The final section of the book is a very useful 128 page appendix which complements the text chapters and serves as a supplemental reference source for information on terminology and definitions; embryology, growth and maturation, radiographic measurements, and classifications referable to the paediatric spine.

All in all this book will make an outstanding addition to the knowledge and understanding of spinal problems in childhood. It is certainly a book I would recommend to all units dealing with paediatric spinal conditions. It will be of use not just to the trainee but will provide a valuable source of reference to all paediatric spinal surgeons and their colleagues.

J C DORGAN
Consultant orthopaedic surgeon