methodological problems of establishing the prevalence of disability in childhood. Failure to thrive appears, with variable degrees of authority, in three separate chapters.

Unfortunately, as a result of these limitations, piled it had to go in which niche this book belongs. The style of presentation is too heavyweight to engage the interest of students, but is mostly not detailed enough to provide a readable resource for practicing. I would have liked it more if each chapter had drawn on the specialist insight of the contributor to produce thought provoking ideas, even if some subjects were not covered at all.

Being asked to review this book offered me the opportunity to offend, at one stroke, 52 eminent contributors. This has not been a welcome task. I wish I could have praised the book more, but ultimately I found it unsatisfying. Maybe the next edition will more effectively hit the mark.

**CHARLOTTE WRIGHT**
Honorary senior registrar community child health


There are few fields in medicine where the introduction of magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) has had such an impact on our understanding of disease processes as in the paediatric brain. The rapidity of this development is highlighted by the author in his introduction by the large number of new references cited. While the majority of the book content concerned with the value of MRI, ultrasound in the neonatal period and computed tomography in certain circumstances are well covered. However, its strength is that throughout it correlates imaging appearances with clinical and pathological findings.

The chapter on normal brain maturation and development is particularly important. It provides both radiologists and paediatricians with reference standards for the rapid changes seen on MRI in the first 18 months of life.

Pathological processes are dealt with in a series of chapters covering toxic and metabolic effects, destructive lesions including hypoxic and ischaemia injury, congenital anomalies, and neoplasms. At each stage there are precise definitions of statements made and the interpretation and usage of these in these in the literature not always the same. This provides a clear and concise understanding of what is meant by the various terms and titles given to appearances on imaging. The phakomatoses and the rare vascular diseases of the nervous system are dealt with in separate chapters. There is a useful chapter on hydrocephalus and disorders of cerebrospinal fluid flow dynamics including the complications of treatment, particularly valuable as it probably represents the single commonest indication for a paediatric brain scan that many general radiologists may be called upon to interpret.

The author and his colleagues are to be congratulated on producing a superb volume which will become a standard reference in paediatric neuroimaging. It should be available to both neuroradiologists and general radiologists when they come to interpret computed tomography or MR images of the brain in children and will be an invaluable source for paediatric neurologists and paediatricians.

This will not be a book that gathers dust in our department.

**ANDREW J MOLYNEUX**
Consultant neuroradiologist


One of the advantages of being asked to review a book for *Archives of Disease in Childhood* is that the reviewer is allowed to keep the book. Accordingly, I was delighted to be invited to review this particular volume as I had already decided to buy it. Now having read it, I can say that it has even exceeded my expectations. Here in one small volume are covered the majority of topics in childhood nutrition. The nature of the subject, of course, is wide ranging and we find the range from those of the preterm infant to those of the adolescent. New research findings and the hypotheses generated from them are reviewed, and make this a valuable reference in childhood nutrition. Recent data on the constituents of human breast milk and their relevance to the developing brain, together with the concept of early nutrition in programming various pathophysiological processes in subjects is a particular interest. The nutritional aspects of managing specific diseases are covered and include renal disease, cystic fibrosis, and a useful contribution on children with cerebral palsy. For those of us who need guiding principles to help them through the quagmire of childhood food allergy and food intolerance, Professor Tim David's chapter (a 'taster' for the book of Nutrition and the nutritional needs of children in developing countries, which highlights the growing awareness of micronutrient deficiency in these areas.

This book is well written and authoritative, with contributions from acknowledged leading exponents in the various fields covered. Its practical size and format and easy readability should make it attractive to a wide range of health care professionals with an interest in the nutritional aspects of child health.

**PETER B SULLIVAN**
University lecturer/honorary consultant paediatrician


Soon after my MRCP written examination my houseman asked me if I was grateful for his concern and generosity, but then found I was expected to provide an expert opinion. No matter, despite its gaudy yellow and mauve cover the book sold out in both London and London in the following month which illustrates the demand for such a text. The book gives sensible advice about viva technique and provides a synopsis of subjects within the broad areas covered in the viva, many of which are not in conventional textbooks. It does this by providing model answers to frequently asked or topical questions. The model answers are written in the first person, and while initially I found it difficult to read, I found myself borrowing and practising slick phrases. The chapter on viva technique was the most valuable; general advice about structuring the answer, citing common examples first and giving phrases to substitute for 'I don't know' helped me prepare for ambush questions. The information used to prepare the book seems to be anecdotal, rather than based on a number, and I would find a similar book for the adult examination. It would be useful to have included a longer list of questions as an appendix so one could prepare the techniques.

Examiners may also find this book of value, but their reading may result in more hazardous questions or even higher expectation; for them I suggest a higher retail price.