claims concerning the benefit of physical methods of treat-
ment, have proved notoriously unreliable when they have
been subjected to comparative trials by ‘neutral’ observers,
recently. Therefore, it is vital to provide the statistical
evidence for the benefits to be expected in the various
conditions which are described.

Having read the book, however, I felt sufficiently intrigued
by Mr. Grieves’ methods to wish that I could visit and
observe his methods in a clinical setting. To provoke such an
interest is, presumably what such a book sets out to achieve.

It is well produced in paperback, it has a useful bibliogra-
phy and list of suggested further reading, but it does not
contain an index.

In summary, it could be the basis of a much needed
exchange of views between physiotherapists, osteopaths
and chiropracters. Certainly it would be a useful asset to most
libraries in hospital physiotherapy department.

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Multiple Choice Questions in Biochemistry, H. Hassall, A.J.
Turner and E.J. Wood. Pp. vi + 250, illustrated. Pitman,
London, 1985. £5.95.

This small book aims at encouraging students to learn about
biochemistry, or have their learning reinforced, by asking
questions. It is as if the reader is attending tutorials in which
the authors ask questions, correct the answers and provide
explanations in a completely standard form.

The 200 questions presented by the authors are either in the
form of 5-part completion statements or 5-choice answer
questions with one or more alternatives correct. They cover a
wide range of biochemical topics in the fields relevant to
medical and dental studies and the explanations provided are
mostly very clear and concise. It would be stretching things a
little to state that the book contains ‘everything a medical
undergraduate needs to know about biochemistry’ but there
is a generous sample of what a student’s knowledge should
be. Certainly a student knowing the correct answer and
explanation for the majority of questions should have little to
fear from an examination in this subject.

The book is divided into two parts. First there are 10 sets of
20 questions, each set covering a variety of topics and
arranged so that questions in successive sets are progressively
harder. The second part comprises explanations arranged in
topics, cross-referenced so that it is easy to find the relevant
explanation for each question. Printing each question twice
to achieve this has meant an increase by a third in the size of
the book. It seems questionable whether much advantage has
been gained. By the time students come to use the book, they
are unlikely to gain much by having questions grouped in
terms of difficult and presented questions in sets each
covering a variety of topics may simulate examination
conditions but probably do not much enhance the value of
this book as a self-assessment/revision aid.

While aimed at undergraduates, there is no doubt that the
subject matter of the book is also relevant to postgraduates
studying basic medical science for higher qualifications.

Whether the book helps those who seek to create questions,
as the authors suggest in the preface, is another matter.

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Obstetric Analgesia and Anaesthesia, Second edition, J.
Selwyn Crawford. Current Reviews in Obstetrics and Gyn-

The fact that the first edition of this excellent monograph
sold out and required the production of a second only
eighteen months after its initial publication is a significant
tribute to its importance in this field.

Dr Selwyn Crawford has for many years been the leading
proponent of the art and science of analgesia and anaesthesia
in obstetric practice in this country and, I suspect, the world.
He is a zealot, and as such excites opposition particularly
from the proponents of ‘natural childbirth’.

He has never believed that acceptance of pain should be
held to represent some sort of maternal triumph over adversity. Indeed he points out that it can harm both mother
and child.

Whilst few, if any, departments in which I have worked
have achieved the high standards that he lays down, this does
not mean that he is wrong or that we should not continue to
strive to achieve them. Lack of resources, both in money
and manpower, are often used as an excuse for failure, particularly
in communication with the patient and gaining their co-
operation.

Few subjects excite more mumbo-jumbo than this one, and
for those who sometimes feel slightly apologetic at the use of
high technology medicine this book should serve not only as
a bible but help to give that technology a human face.

I cannot commend it too highly to established consultant
and student alike.

E.B. Lewis
S.E. Kent DHA,
Folkestone,
Kent CT19 SHL.

The Parents’ A to Z: a Handbook for Children’s Health,
Growth and Happiness, Penelope Leach. Pp. 736. Penguin
Books, Harmondsworth, 1985. $6.95, $16.95 (Australia),
$19.95 (New Zealand), $14.95 (Canada).

In the days of the extended family the giving of advice on
bringing up children was left to the elders in the community –
usually grandmothers and aunts. Nowadays young mothers,
almost too frequently, have no-one to turn to except their Health
Visitor, GP or clinic. The only alternatives are an article in
one of the women’s magazines or a radio phone-in.

The trouble with the professionals is that they are thought