Recent Advances in Respiratory Medicine. No. 4, edited by David C. Flenley and Thomas L. Petty. Pp. ix + 285, illustrated. Churchill Livingstone, Edinburgh, London, Melbourne, New York, 1986. £37.50.

This is a very good series for keeping up to date with advances in respiratory medicine and, as such, would appeal to both consultant chest physicians and those in training. The 16 chapters on different aspects of respiratory medicine are well written and concise, and, with one exception, up-to-date (i.e. early 1986). With two chapters, however, there was a certain *déjà vu* feeling with recent editorials written by the same authors in *Thorax* and *Quarterly Journal of Medicine*. The authors are roughly evenly split between the UK/Europe and the USA/Canada, with one from New Zealand, though the UK authors are limited to the City Hospital, Edinburgh and the Brompton Hospital, London.

Marketing a paperback edition would lower the present hardback price of £37.50 for 285 pages which compares unfavourably with similar ventures (e.g. *Advanced Medicine* 22, hardback, £19.95 for 416 pages). In this book I particularly enjoyed the chapters on the pulmonary complications of AIDS, pulmonary thromboembolism, topics in chronic bronchitis and emphysema (this included the use of pulmonary vasodilators and inspiratory muscle training), and asthma (epidemiology, and airways hyper-responsiveness). Other chapters were on COPD (pathogenesis, use of domiciliary oxygen), lung cancer (identification, staging), breathing during sleep, cell receptors in asthma, tuberculosis control, sarcoidosis, fibrosing alveolitis, pleural effusion, and cephalosporins in lung disease.

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Respiratory Disorders in the Newborn, Victor Y.H. Yu. Current Reviews in Paediatrics 2. Pp. + 156, illustrated. Churchill Livingstone, Edinburgh, London, Melbourne, New York, 1986. £19.00.

This monograph is the second in a series of current reviews in paediatrics jointly edited by T.L. Chambers and A. Aynsley-Green. It accomplishes admirably the intention of the author which was to provide an up-to-date review of the basic pathophysiology and management of neonatal respiratory problems for all those involved in the medical care of neonates and for those in training. It is not intended for the 'super specialist'.

This slim volume deals first with normal lung development and physiology, followed by sections on all the different types of respiratory problems commonly encountered in the newborn nursery. The clarity of approach is exemplary and the text is very easy to read and absorb. References are very up-to-date. Thus the reader is provided with a succinct and clear explanation of the underlying principles and options of neonatal care of a type usually obtained only by extensive experience in the management of such babies.

I strongly recommend this book to junior medical staff working, or planning to work, in neonatal units since this should enable them to deal with their patients more confidently and knowledgeably.

The author stresses that the performance of neonatal resuscitation requires knowledge of the normal adaptation to extrauterine life, the physiology and pharmacology of resuscitation and skills in the evaluation of asphyxia and the techniques required. This book will be extremely helpful in acquiring the necessary understanding.

My only criticisms are minor ones. The third generation cephalosporins are dismissed fairly readily, though they are in fact increasingly used in Gram-negative sepsis including meningitis, and acyclovir is now a drug of choice in disseminated herpes infection in the newborn rather than vidarabine. The book is strongly recommended for both medical and nursing staff working in the field and is good value at the price.

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Respiratory Infections, edited by Merle A. Sande, Leonard D. Hudson and Richard K. Root. Contemporary Issues in Infectious Diseases. Vol. 5. Pp. xiv + 377, illustrated. Churchill Livingstone, New York, Edinburgh, London, Melbourne, 1986. £40.00.

This book is one of a series on contemporary issues in infectious diseases. It covers selected topics of current interest which are related to respiratory infections. The early chapters discuss the nature of host defences, immune deficiency and the mechanisms of infection. Subsequent chapters cover a wide range of subjects including infectivity in tuberculosis, ecology of Legionellosis, pathogenesis of rheumatic fever, AIDS, sepsis in adult respiratory distress syndrome and various upper respiratory infections including the common cold.

The preface states that the book bridges the gap between basic science and clinical medicine and to a large extent this is achieved in most of the chapters. The microbiological and particularly the immunological background to the clinical problems are presented and critically discussed. As in all multi-author books, the standard of the chapters varies and the section on acute and chronic bronchitis in particular is disappointing.

The book is clearly written and has several useful flow charts and tables. It is adequately indexed and referenced, although in many chapters there are no references more recent than 1983. This is a valuable book for those with an interest in clinical microbiology, or infectious diseases and for chest physicians and those dealing with immune compromised patients.

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