Child Health – A Textbook for the DCH, edited by D. Harvey and I. Kovar. Pp. x + 454, 97 illustrations. Churchill Livingstone, Edinburgh, London, Melbourne, Tokyo, New York, 1991. £32.50, paperback.

Do not be put off by the sub-title. The text is much more relevant to child health than the Diploma. The main concessions to the DCH are three pages on technique and 137 multiple-choice questions. Nearly all the questions have been covered by the text, and the answers are easily accessed by an excellent index. Less than half a dozen of the answers are seriously contentious.

The book is aimed specifically towards the needs of family doctors and community medical officers. Virtually all aspect of child health are included, with different specialists for each chapter, generally well chosen emerging experts who add to their reputations. There are very good reviews of child abuse, the principles of pharmacology and immunological disorders. There is little about the newer developments in genetics and ante-natal ultrasound diagnosis. Screening techniques for examining vision and hearing are glossed over, whereas they are likely to be pass or fail essentials of the clinical examination.

The great strength of this book is its emphasis on the practical problems that primary care and junior hospital doctors have to sort out quickly. It answers questions that repeatedly generate frustrating telephone calls for help to a consultant who is hard to locate. The new style family doctor, doing the practice child health surveillance, will find this book indispensable. I will recommend it to our junior doctors also, as a practical guide to diagnosis and management. It is far better value for money than the DCH itself.

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Health, Prevention and Economics, D.R. Cohen and J.B. Henderson. Pp. 175, illustrated. Oxford University Press, Oxford, New York, 1991. £15.00, paperback.

It is a good discipline, even if it can be an exacting one, for doctors to take account of non-medical perceptions of health and health services. Economists have been particularly keen to satisfy this (usually unstated) need, and their writings tend to be more lucid than those of other sociologists. This book is commendably clear, and well illustrated with figures, tables and examples. Unlike most books on health economics, it focuses particularly on prevention, and for me it grasps the heart of the matter – that preventive measures are neither universally effective, nor universally futile, but each has to be assessed on its own merits, using economic as well as other criteria. As the authors themselves say, 'very simple yet not widely recognised'.

Two hopefully helpful criticisms. It may be better to judge health status on data derived directly from patients, for example, the Nottingham Health Profile, than from the vicarious judgments of panels not themselves involved. And a more personal one – the claim (p. 159) that the so-called Black Report 'did not include measures that involved the NHS among its recommendations' is an

economy of truth – we recommended a 'district action programme' relating to both health and welfare (though in the event we might as well have recommended platinum bed-pans).

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The Management of Limb Inequality, edited by M.B. Menelaus. Pp. viii + 256, illustrated. Churchill Livingstone, Edinburgh, 1991. £55, hardback.

This volume is the latest in a respected series of monographs from Churchill Livingstone. It is largely based on the experience of managing limb length inequality at the Royal Children's Hospital in Melbourne, Australia. Indeed, nearly half the contributors come from that hospital, with further contributions from Florida, Toronto, Los Angeles and New York.

The volume is valuable in drawing together a number of methods of tackling the problem of limb length inequality. Some of the methods to which chapters are devoted, such as growth plate arrest or shortening of the contralateral normal limb are more of historical interest. The volume suffers from failing to include contributors from any of those in Russia, Italy or Spain who have been most innovative in this field in the last decade. Those searching for a complete review of the potential of the Ilizarov Fixator, for example, will need to look elsewhere. Nevertheless there are helpful accounts of the management of the large and the small foot, and limb length discrepancy in the upper limb.

The book is a worthy addition to the series and will prove helpful for the general orthopaedic surgeon hoping to remain informed as to the most appropriate methods of managing these important problems.

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Blood – Atlas and Sourcebook of Hematology, Carola T. Kapff and James H. Jandl. Pp. ix + 157, 255 illustrations. Little, Brown and Company, Boston, London, Toronto, 1991. £70, hardback.

This atlas contains around 1,200 photomicrographs, many of which are quite superb and the authors love their subject. However, I cannot recommend this book for several reasons. Firstly, the authors have failed to identify their market, the atlas is too complex for a non-haematologist and yet of no value as a reference work. Secondly, although it appears superficially well presented with a standard format (between three and eight photomicrographs on each right hand page which are discussed on the opposite page) it is difficult to read; the typeface is too small, references to the photographs are buried in the text and there is too much waffle. The section on non-Hodgkin's lymphomas is poor and refers to only two classification systems: Rappaport's (1956) and the 'Working Formulation'. The first of these is very out of date and the second is not meant to be used as a classification system but as a form of Esperanto to permit com-

parison of different series of patients. In contrast, the Kiel classification, used by most European histopathologists, is not mentioned.

I would happily recommend several excellent atlases of haematology, but this is not one of them. Any reader interested in obtaining a useful reference and with the same amount of money to spend should browse through the shelves at a medical bookshop, and decide whether they prefer *Haematological Cytology* (Heyhoe and Flemens), *An Atlas of Haematology* (McDonald and Cruickshank) or *The Sandoz Atlas of Clinical Haematology* (Hoffbrand and Pettit).

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Free Radicals and Food Additives, edited by Okezie I. Aruoma and Barry Halliwell. Pp. xvii + 200, illustrated. Taylor & Francis, London, New York, Philadelphia, 1991. £35, hardback.

Much of our knowledge about the free radical oxidation of lipids (lipid peroxidation) that is now applied to the biological sciences came from the pioneering work of food scientists during the 1950s and 1960s. However, the explosion of medical interest in oxygen free radicals during the last 20 years has meant that most of the major advances in free radical research have come from scientists working outside the food industry. To some extent this is reflected in *Free Radical and Food Additives* in which only two chapters are contributed by academic and industrial food research groups.

The book has eight chapters covering the topics of: the consumer's perception of food safety; free radical chemistry of food additives; the biological toxicity of free radicals; lipid peroxidation; health aspects of oxidized lipids; antioxidants in foods; antioxidant loss from plastic food-packaging and pro-oxidant properties of food additives. Chapters 2, 3 and 4 are written from a general biochemical point of view by chemists and biochemists not directly working in the food industry, and slightly overlap in their treatment of lipid peroxidation mechanisms. The potential health aspects of lipid oxidation products in food, discussed in chapter 5, is of considerable concern to regulatory authorities in Europe and the USA. It has been known for a long time that the thermal or oxidative degradation of cooking oils leads to the formation of numerous toxic products. Several of these are derived from cholesterol, and there is much current interest in the possible role of oxidized body cholesterol in aiding the development of atherosclerosis.

Many of the 'off' flavours associated with polyunsaturated fatty acid-containing food products arise because of the formation of numerous aldehydes during the peroxidation process. Although there have been great advances in isolating and identifying many of these aldehydes, the topic was, unfortunately, not well covered in the book.

The authors and editors are to be congratulated, however, on putting together a readable, informative and reasonably priced book of interest to both basic biologists and those working in the food industry.

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Diagnostic Ultrasound: Physics, biology, and instrumentation, Stewart C. Bushong and Benjamin R. Archer. Pp. xi + 177, 194 illustrations. Wolfe, London, 1991. £34.95, hardback.

This book comes from two authors with many years of experience teaching the physics of diagnostic ultrasound. It should be regarded as an introductory text book for those who may be starting a course to train as sonographers, and for those medical staff whose prime interest is in the clinical use of ultrasound but who wish to understand the physics function of the various controls on a modern diagnostic ultrasound machine.

The book assumes no pre-knowledge of physics, starting as it does with a discussion of mass, length and time, and then proceeding via the laws of motion and of energy to the basic concepts of wave motion. This introductory section occupies about 20% of the text whereupon we proceed to the nature of ultrasound, its production and its interaction with matter.

Having progressed through 40% of the text and obtained a very satisfactory knowledge of basic physics, we concentrate on the more medical aspects of ultrasound physics learning about the beam, pulse echo imaging and real-time transducers. The concluding 40% of the text covers image display and analysis, Doppler ultrasound, quality control and finally the biological effect of ultrasound on tissue. Throughout the text the reader is provided with mathematical examples which have been worked out, and at the end of each chapter are a number of review questions, the answers to many of which are given at the end of the book.

The text is conspicuously illustrated, there being illustrations on almost every page. Definitions of all of the terms used are given and can be rapidly located via a comprehensive index. Whilst a physicist may be unhappy with some of the definitions, for example, that of demodulation which is defined and illustrated without reference to a carrier wave, such simplification may be justified in a book of the type being reviewed. However, if the reader progresses from this text to another book, he may become confused by a more rigorous definition. The generous use of diagrams to illustrate the definitions ensures that the reader understands the concepts involved.

In the chapter on quality control, the second part of the sentence 'A volt ohm meter can be used to verify that the scanner is properly grounded so that no externally-grounded components touch the sonographer or the patient' is unclear.

The book, published in 1991, is up to date in the range of ultrasound techniques covered. Missing from the book is a reference list for further reading, but this may be wise in view of the width of the field covered and the hope that most of its readers will have access to a library for further study.

Overall this is a useful text for a person starting to train as a sonographer or doing the ultrasound part of the radiographers diploma, but will need to be supplemented by other texts at a later stage.

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