diatric emergency medicine by a major lack of "evidence" but this book has useful individually annotated reference lists of what are mainly small case report series.

In conclusion I recommend this book to all paediatric and accident and emergency departments and also to primary care centres. The volume purchased for this hospital early after publication is now battered enough to demonstrate its usefulness.

B M PHILLIPS

*Consultant in Paediatric Emergency Medicine,
Liverpool*

Clinical and Resuscitative Data. A Compendium of Acute Medical Data. 5th Ed. By Richard Dunnill and Peter Colvin. (Pp 204; £19.95.) Blackwell Science, 1998. ISBN 0-86542-788-7.

The preface to the first edition indicates this book is intended for staff in accident and emergency (A&E) departments, intensive care, and other resuscitation areas. Sadly, despite this, the authors have not enlisted the help of anyone from A&E in the preparation of the book. This oversight has led to the production of a book that cannot be recommended for use within an A&E department. Although it does contain some useful information, this book contains a great deal that is irrelevant to A&E staff as well as numerous errors.

I doubt that many who work in A&E need to know, while resuscitating a patient, that the unit of light is a candela nor how to convert from knots to miles per hour. A whole section is devoted to feeding critically ill patients; this is not an issue for A&E.

Among the more serious of the errors this book contains, the algorithms for basic life support (for both children and adults) do not make any mention of summoning the cardiac arrest team or calling 999. Shouting for help is omitted completely from the paediatric algorithm. The adult advanced life support algorithms are not those most recently produced by the Resuscitation Council; this seems quite likely to lead to confusion. The periarrest algorithms are said to be reproduced from those of the European Resuscitation Council but contain omissions. Atrial fibrillation, for example, does not appear in the narrow complex tachycardia algorithm.

There is a section listing drug interactions. I would suggest that the safest way of avoiding inadvertent interactions is by referring to the *British National Formulary*, especially since this section does omit some potentially fatal interactions (including those involving antihistamines which quite possibly could be prescribed in the A&E department).

The final section attempts to provide guidance on the management of drug overdose. I would view most of the advice regarding gastric lavage, induced vomiting, and activated charcoal as out of date. A potentially dangerous piece of advice is that *N*-acetylcysteine can be harmful when administered more than 15 hours after the ingestion of paracetamol. There is good evidence that in paracetamol induced liver failure *N*-acetylcysteine is of benefit even when started one or two days after ingestion. Finally the recommendation that patients who have taken an overdose of paracetamol should be admitted to an intensive care unit will, I suspect, generate a mixture of amusement and amazement among staff who work in the A&E department.

I cannot comment on the value this book may have for anaesthetists and intensive care doctors but do feel that it has no role at all within A&E medicine. I would discourage A&E doctors from buying or using it.

R D HARDERN

*Consultant Physician in Acute Medicine and
Consultant in Accident and Emergency Medicine,
Leeds*

Books received

Handbook of Orthopaedic Emergencies. By Raymond G Hart, Timothy James Rittenberry, and Dennis T Uehara. (Pp 510; £28.00). Lippincott-Raven, 1999. ISBN 0-7817-1610-1.

Handbook of Interpretation of Diagnostic Tests. By Jacques Wallach. (Pp 564; £18.00.) Lippincott-Raven, 1998. ISBN 0-7817-1221-1.

NOTICES

Better Practice in Trauma Care, SWAN VII Trauma Seminar

6-7 August 1999, Sydney, Australia
Further details: SWAN Conference Secretariat, Liverpool Hospital, Elizabeth Street, Liverpool, Sydney 2170, Australia (tel: +61 2 9828 3928, fax: +61 2 9828 3926, e-mail: michael.sugrue@swsahs.nsw.gov.au, web site: <http://www.swsahs.nsw.gov.au/livtrauma>).

Emergency Care in the Air

13 September 1999, Queen's Medical Centre, Nottingham
Further details: Education Department, Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh (tel: +44 (0) 131 527 1676, e-mail: education@rcsed.ac.uk, web site: http://www.rcsed.ac.uk/Diary/emergency_care_in_the_air.htm).

British Paediatric A&E Group Autumn Meeting

16 September 1999, Devonshire House, Derbyshire Royal Infirmary
Further details: Mrs Jill Straw, Postgraduate Education Manager, Devonshire House, Derbyshire Royal Infirmary, London Road, Derby DE1 2QY.

12th Annual Congress of the European Society of Intensive Care Medicine

3-6 October 1999, Berlin, Germany
Further details: ESICM Congress Secretariat, 40 Avenue Joseph Wybran, 1070 Brussels, Belgium (tel: +32 2 559 03 05, fax: +32 2 527 00 62, e-mail: esicm@popost.eunet.be, web site: <http://www.esicm.org>).

Better Practice in Trauma Care, SWAN VIII Trauma Seminar

5-6 August 2000, Sydney, Australia
Further details: SWAN Conference Secretariat, Liverpool Hospital, Elizabeth Street, Liverpool, Sydney 2170, Australia (tel: +61 2 9828 3928, fax: +61 2 9828 3926, e-mail: michael.sugrue@swsahs.nsw.gov.au, web site: <http://www.swsahs.nsw.gov.au/livtrauma>).