

many others. There is one chapter of 12 pages describing anesthetic techniques. It is entitled "Painless Childbirth" and begins with an historical note on Sir James Simpson and his use of chloroform and continues with a description of the era of "twilight sleep." There are several paragraphs on specific analgesics and regional methods including, barbiturates, Demerol, Trilene, spinal, continuous caudal and local anesthesia. Nitrous oxide and ether are mentioned briefly in a discussion of the three phases of pain in childbirth. There is a sensible discussion of "natural childbirth." There is no mention of cyclopropane and no reference to anesthesia for cesarean section. The material in this relatively small chapter relating to anesthetics is accurate and well presented and would be most helpful to an expectant mother. Its usefulness to an anesthesiologist would be only as a guidebook to which he could refer lay persons who are interested in pain relief during the phases of childbirth.

RUTH M. ANDERSON, M.D.

Perinatal Loss in Modern Obstetrics. BY ROBERT E. L. NESBITT, JR., M.D., with a foreword by NICHOLAS J. EASTMAN, M.D. Cloth \$12.50. Pp. 450, with 112 illustrations. F. A. Davis Company, 1914 Cherry Street, Philadelphia 3, 1957.

In this book Dr. Nesbitt, Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology at the Albany Medical College, has summarized and integrated the many factors concerned in deaths in the perinatal period. Among the subjects presented for evaluation are abortion, prematurity, anoxia, birth injuries, malformations, infections, multiple and ectopic gestation, and analgesia and anesthesia. Much of the material discussed and many of the excellent illustrations were obtained from the Pathological Laboratory of the Department of Obstetrics of Johns Hopkins University. Dr. Nesbitt is a former director of that laboratory.

The chapter on anesthesia and analgesia presents a review of some of the anesthetic problems encountered in the perinatal period. The author makes no attempt to evaluate or recommend any particular anesthetic techniques or agents, but pleads for more competent anesthetists and more careful consideration of the many variable factors encountered in the perinatal period. Therefore, for the anesthesiologists, this book would seem valuable only as a reference for those particularly interested in obstetrical anesthesia.

The format of the book is excellent. The binding, however, is of poor quality.

DAVID A. DAVIS, M.D.

Human Blood Groups and Inheritance. Second Edition. BY SYLVIA D. LAWLER, M.D. (ENG.), and L. J. LAWLER, B.Sc. (ENG.), with a foreword by R. R. RACE, Ph.D., M.R.C.S., F.R.S. (ENG.). Paper \$1.50. Pp. 103, with 10 illustrations. Harvard University Press, 79 Garden Street, Cambridge 38, Massachusetts—(Printed in Great Britain), 1957.

Although this authoritative little book has its principal emphasis on the biological and genetic relationships which determine human blood groups, it presents in a surprisingly comprehensive and interesting manner the rationale of modern methods of blood grouping.

A concise historical chapter brings the reader from ancient Greece to the early 1950's and is followed by a brief review of modern techniques of blood grouping. Most of the book deals with the major blood group systems, and important factual statements are emphasized by simple examples. Particularly impressing is the clarity of the three paragraphs which explain the "indirect Coombs test." An essential minimum of mathematical and statistical data is presented, chiefly to show the genetic mechanisms of inheritance of blood groups. A short account of the most recent blood group systems, of less clinical significance than the major systems, occupies 10 pages, and is followed by a chapter describing the British National Blood Transfusion System.

A final chapter, entitled "Human Blood Groups and Biology," goes beyond the practical clinical considerations of the dangers of incompatible blood transfusions, and of