drawings are superb and together with the details in the text enable the book to be used very successfully as a textbook of operative paediatric orthopaedic surgery.

The sad thing about a book of this nature in a rapidly evolving subject such as orthopaedics is that it is already out of date on some important issues by the time it is in print. For example, there is no discussion of the recent important developments concerning criteria for selection for treatment in meningomyelocele patients. In scoliosis the recent advances using halo-pelvic traction and the Dwyer cable method of anterior spinal fusion are not described. Similarly in the treatment of spondylolisthesis intertransverse fusion is not discussed, and I think many orthopaedic surgeons would shrink from a post-operative regime for spinal fusion in this condition which requires four to six months in a double hip spica. Throughout the book the author has a preference for long-term splintage in bivalved casts which I personally do not share. However, whether to splint or not to splint and for how long is likely to remain a hotly debated subject among orthopaedic surgeons for many years to come.

Anyone who wants a detailed account of a paediatric orthopaedic condition will find this an excellent book. If there is not sufficient information in the text the vast number of references available at the end of each chapter make a good starting point for further research. From the point of view of surgical technique the detailed descriptions and illustrations of operative procedures are invaluable. At a cost of nearly £30 it represents a considerable outlay, particularly for anyone not specialising in paediatric orthopaedics. However, it should be available in the orthopaedic section of every medical library as a work of reference which I am sure will be frequently and usefully consulted.—J. A. FIXSEN.

Flexible Implant Resection Arthroplasty in the Hand and Extremities. By Alfred B. SWANSON, M.D., F.A.C.S., Clinical Professor of Surgery, Michigan State University, Lansing, Michigan. 18×26 cm. Pp. xv+352, with 552 figures and some tables. Index. 1973. St Louis: The C. V. Mosby Company. London: Henry Kimpton. Price £16·85.

The title stands stark and cumbersome like the plain rock portal to an Aladdin's cave, for within there is treasure, and the forewords by Emanuel Kaplan and Erik Moberg and introduction by Edward Nalebuff herald the importance of this contribution to hand surgery.

An account of the development of the silicones and their unique properties is followed by details of the experiments which led to the evolution of the prostheses in current use. The author has harvested the fruit of his considerable experience with finger prostheses and the techniques and results are reported in satisfactory detail. There is a wise emphasis on the need for adequate correction of extra-articular deforming forces and the importance of the aftercare.

By contrast other prostheses, notably carpal bone replacements, are assessed in nebulous terms such as "adequate range of motion, stability . . . have been achieved in most of our patients"—a strange lapse when the author has devoted a chapter to the detailed evaluation of disabilities and record keeping. There are many who will disagree with the favourable assessment of the ulnar head prosthesis. The author reports complications of this implant, in particular instability, which is a common experience. It would seem that this prosthesis offers an unnecessary embellishment to an otherwise eminently satisfactory procedure.

The book contains much more than is suggested by the title. There are excellent and erudite chapters on the pathology of arthritis and on the pathomechanics of the deformities which occur in the rheumatoid hand, and a logical account of their management. The role of disease of the flexor apparatus in the evolution of deformities such as the swan-neck finger is stressed, and although this is not generally accepted, it is, I feel sure, a correct explanation. As the various problems encountered in the rheumatoid hand are discussed in detail, it is surprising that no mention is given to the difficult situation of rupture of both flexors which usually occurs at the entrance to the fibrous flexor sheath.

Dr Swanson's faith in the silicones as an implant material has been borne out by experience—it has proved versatile and inert. Exciting advances in silicone technology are being made and the evolution of much stronger tear resistant silicone rubbers will enhance the present generation of prostheses and open up many new applications. All 352 pages and 552 illustrations are beautifully produced and a credit to both the author and the publishers. The price at £16·85 will not deter the connoisseur, who will enjoy owning this book for, to borrow a phrase from page 71, it has like "the form of the hand, a certain unique elegance".—B. HELAL.

Perspectives in Biomedical Engineering. Proceedings of a symposium organised in association with the Biological Engineering Society and held in the University of Strathclyde, Glasgow, June 1972. Edited by R. M. KENEDY, Bioengineering Unit, Wolfson Centre, University of Strathclyde. 21·5×30·5 cm. Pp. xx+314, with many figures and tables. Index. 1973. London and Basingstoke: Macmillan. Price £11·50.

Undoubtedly the opening of the Wolfson Centre in June 1972 was a great occasion. The esteem with which the Bioengineering Unit at the University of Strathclyde, and its leader, Professor R. M. Kenedi, are regarded, was evident from the gathering of distinguished participants in the symposium held to celebrate the occasion. The title is apt, in respect of the breadth of field touched upon, but the book cannot be regarded as a survey of the subject; certainly it is not to be taken out as a textbook. It comprises verbatim records of the papers and discussions attractively presented and beautifully edited.

Orthopaedic surgeons who strive to keep abreast of basic work in their field will benefit from reading Sections B and C (Sections A and D relate to cardiology, nephrology and medical physics) if only qualitatively. Much of the material has been published elsewhere but new presentations often give fresh insight into what the investigators have said previously. It should be recommended to trainee orthopaedic surgeons as a useful collection of biomechanical research results to which, it is to be hoped, they are becoming increasingly receptive. The price is reasonable.

There is considerable reduplication of the philosophical aspects of the subject (inevitable, without excluding sections of the individual papers), and while it is satisfying to know that engineers are aware of the gap between what they can explain in basic terms, and what, in the clinic, must be dealt with in a relatively empirical manner, there is now no need for this to be laboured unduly. In his epilogue Mr Wolff, who has to be seen and heard to be really appreciated and who is undoubtedly a scientist, drives home the existence of the gap but fails to resolve the fact that biomedical research is valuable. —R. A. ELSON.

L'Application du Flux Laminaire dans le Domaine Hospitalier. (The Application of Air Flow in Hospitals.) Cahiers Antipollution 2. International Symposium on Laminar Flow in the Operating-room, Lyon, France, June 13 and 14, 1973. Organised by the French Association for the Study of Biocontamination and the French Association of Hospital Engineering. Edited by J. D. Joubert. 15.5 × 24 cm. Pp. xiv + 189, with many figures and tables. 1973. Circulated privately by Dr J. D. Joubert, Cahiers Antipollution, B.P. 33, 69603 Villeurbanne, France.

The importance of ventilation in the control of theatre infection, so ably demonstrated by Charnley in this country, is of world-wide concern and slowly attracting the attention it deserves. Here is a conference report, well above the usual standard, from a refreshing mixture of surgeons, engineers and architects. The report is also conveniently bilingual. The English section includes articles on the Wrightington experiment, on German experiences in Munster and air movements in the theatre in Stockholm. In the French section aerobiocontamination is gone into in detail, ably backed by graphs and diagrams. This book is essential for anyone concerned with control of infection in theatres, and for any architect planning the construction of a pollution-free theatre. —J. G. BONNIN.

Progress in Pediatric Radiology. Volume 4. Intrinsic Diseases of Bones. Edited by H. J. KAUFMANN, Philadelphia. 17.5 × 24.5 cm. Pp. xiv + 594, with 259 figures comprising 481 single illustrations and 16 tables. Index. 1973. Basel, München, Paris, New York, Sydney: S. Karger. Price £27.20.

This collection of essays on selected topics related to generalised disorders of the skeleton has already established itself as a most valuable source of reference in the radiological and orthopaedic departments of a large children's hospital.

Increasing knowledge of the metabolic and genetic disorders which underlie many such conditions inevitably results in the recognition of new clinical syndromes and reclassification and sub-division of some old ones. This is more than an academic exercise, for not only is genetic counselling rendered more precise but also understanding of the metabolic derangements presents opportunities for intra-uterine diagnosis and thereby for prevention. Once the infant is born correction of the metabolic fault may alleviate the condition and awareness of the likely prognosis may rationalise the surgical management.

As a review of progress in a rapidly developing and long neglected field this book is admirable. —G. C. LLOYD-ROBERTS.

Orthopaedic Splints and Appliances. By Joan M. KENNEDY, M.C.S.P., O.N.C., formerly Lecturer in Practical Orthopaedics, Superintendent Orthopaedic After-Care Sister, Nuffield Orthopaedic Centre, Oxford. Foreword by Professor R. B. DUTHIE, Nuffield Professor of Orthopaedic Surgery, University of Oxford. 14.5 × 21 cm. Pp. viii + 200, with 146 figures. Index. 1974. London: Baillière Tindall. Price £2.50.