art. In a slightly different form, similar themes appear in Andrew Warwick's paper on computation which convincingly raises the curtain behind numerical tables to reveal the *deus ex machina* to be numerous skilled underlabourers doing sums. The other piece in this section, George Sweetnam's essay on the diffraction grating, usefully takes the reader into industry and the work ethic. More collected volumes from these workshops are promised. If they match the precise standard of this one they cannot appear too soon.

Christopher Lawrence, Wellcome Institute

Catherine A Neill and **Edward B Clark,** *The developing heart: a 'history' of pediatric cardiology*, Developments in Cardiovascular Medicine, vol. 163, Dordrecht and Boston, Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1995, pp. vi, 169, illus., £40.00, $62.00, Dfl. 95.00 (0–7923–3375–6).

The quotation marks in the subtitle of this book are appropriate for its claim to be a historical work is tenuous indeed. Rather it should be regarded as source material for history.

To justify these comments it is necessary first to point out its historiographical shortcomings. Of these the first is the authors' almost exclusive reliance on secondary sources for any work written before the last fifty years or so. The account of these earlier years is, in any case, cursory but, even allowing for this brevity, there are some notable omissions. Thus, when dealing with the development of ideas about the pathogenesis of congenital heart disease, there is no reference at all to the important work of Johann Friedrich Meckel and Carl Rokitansky. Another notable omission is the failure to comment on the long debate about the mechanism of cyanosis in congenital heart disease. The, to us, obvious explanation that it is due to a veno-arterial shunt failed to convince many physicians, including Thomas Peacock who discussed the problem at length and concluded that the mechanism was venous stasis.

Perhaps the most serious omission is the failure to refer to James Brown's monograph. It was, of course, Brown's misfortune that he wrote in the few years immediately preceding the dramatic developments in diagnosis and treatment which are the main theme of this book. However, many authorities would agree that, as a picture of the "state of the art" at that time, Brown's book was unsurpassed.

Enough has been said about this book's shortcomings and it is necessary to comment on what I believe to be its real significance. It is best regarded as a memoir by two experienced paediatric cardiologists giving an account, largely from personal experience, of the developments in the last few decades in the embryology, pathology, clinical features, treatment—indeed all aspects—of congenital heart disease. If it is read as such, there is much of interest in it to the cardiologist but perhaps not to the historian without a medical background; technicalities abound especially as the authors have boldly taken their story right up to the present day (the latest reference is 1994). An engaging feature is the frequency of asides on topics such as the books read by healthy and ailing children and references in the non-medical literature to children with heart disease. There must be few books on paediatric cardiology or its history which include references to Lewis Carroll and Beatrix Potter and quotations from Anton Chekhov's *A doctor's visit* and Anna Sewell's *Black beauty*. And, where else could one find an account of the foundation of the Harriet Lane Home, the site of Helen Taussig's famous clinic?

P R Fleming, London

Myer H Salaman, *Experiment and interpretation: a pathologist reflects on thirty years of cancer research*, London and Atlantic Highlands, NJ, Athlone Press, 1995, pp. ix, 246, £17.95 (0–485–11470–4).

For the historian of medicine interested in the working practices of cancer researchers, in their experiments and their interpretations of