ion are discussed and also the genetic basis of antibody diversity.

The glossary at the end is exceptionally clear and concise, and in the conclusion there is an interesting guide to the 'epigenetic space' existing between the genotype and phenotype, and a new epigenetic theory of evolution is proposed.

The field of genetics is expanding rapidly and as an increasing number of diseases is understood at a genetic, or even a molecular, level doctors in all fields will require a good working knowledge of developmental genetics. This book provides an enjoyable way of acquiring that knowledge and at £14.50 for the softback edition is very good value.

FRANCES FLINTER

Clinics in Gastroenterology. Paediatric Gastroenterology. Vol 15. Edited by J A Walker-Smith. Pp 203: £13.50 hardback. W B Saunders, 1986.

The publication of this book provides an

opportunity to drive a further nail into the coffin of the idea that paediatric gastroenterology is all colic and constipation. In the nine years since a previous issue of 'Clinics in Gastroenterology' was devoted to paediatrics, there has been a remarkable expansion in both clinical and academic activity in this specialty, which is well reflected in this volume edited by John Walker-Smith.

In particular, it is gratifying to note the arrival of nutritional care, in the primary management of Crohn's disease and cystic fibrosis, for example, as a discipline not best left to the nursing staff or to colleagues practising in developing countries. There are two excellent chapters on infective diarrhoea, both of which are lucid and succinct; Peter Milla reminds us that without motility the gut is but a ship without sails. Although John Walker-Smith's contribution on food sensitive enteropathies is as well written as one has come to expect, I did just wonder if the most exciting days of this topic are in the past. For me, the chapter on the emotional sequelae of inflammatory bowel disease was a gem and

of relevance to all who treat chronic disease in childhood, whatever their special interests. Sadly, I had just read the chapter on antigen handling by the same author in another book; they were identical.

I suppose that editors are allowed to be idiosyncratic. There is perhaps a place, however, in a landmark publication like this, for an authorship that more truly reflects the worldwide interests and expertise in paediatric gastroenterology. A chapter covering all, rather than just one, of the newly recognised causes of protracted diarrhoea in infancy may have been more helpful, and an update on liver transplantation would have lent a desirable topicality. I was a little disappointed that the relation between paediatric gastroenterology and hepatology and the developing world was not more formally acknowledged, although these quibbles are probably but a sign of how much the editor was spoilt for choice.

We all say that our own specialty is rapidly expanding; I hope that paediatricians will read this book and judge for themselves.

I W BOOTH