left with the impression after reading this book that it is generally worthy, perhaps a little dull, and can be most usefully consulted for basic knowledge rather than a critical discussion of present treatment. The lay-out is attractive, and the print does not overtax aging eyes.

PAMELA A. DAVIES

Pulmonary Physiology of the Fetus, Newborn and Child. Edited by EMILE M. SCARPELLI. (Pp. xiv+369; illustrated+tables. £19.25.) London: Kimpton. 1976.

This is on the whole a most readable book, though it does suffer a little from the inevitable repetitions associated with multiple authorship. There are 15 chapters, some dealing with basic pulmonary physiology, others concerned with the development of the lung, and the surfactant system. The rapidly expanding field of fetal homeostasis and breathing movements *in utero* is not neglected, and there are excellent and thought-provoking sections on the control of breathing and the complex forces operating between the alveoli, interstitial space, lymphatics, and the pulmonary capillaries. The lung is regarded not only as an organ of gas exchange but also as having a vital role to play in the battle against the mechanical, chemical, and infective forces that assail us.

Throughout the book there is a good balance between basic physiology and its practical application. The price may well deter the individual paediatrician but it would certainly be a valuable reference work for academic departments and is an

excellent source of information for those who want to 'catch up' in this field.

GILLIAN M. GANDY

Symposium on Development of Upper Respiratory Anatomy and Function. Edited by JAMES F. BOSMA and JANE SHOWACRE. (Pp. 279; illustrated. US \$7.10.) Washington: US Government Printing Office. 1976.

This is a record of a meeting held in Washington in 1971 organized by the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development. It brought together many workers sponsored by that organization with the members of the Nuffield Centre at Oxford and others all doing research in upper airway anatomy and physiology, and some doing human studies. All of the articles had their scripts updated to June 1975.

About a third of the book is concerned with anatomy. The general aspects are not well illustrated but there are better sections on vascularity, nervous control, and chemoreceptors. A section on apnoea production and on infant suckling during artificial feeding records the work of Steve Wealthalls and Paul Johnsons probably better than elsewhere. The objective of the conference was to stimulate work on upper respiratory physiology in relation to the problems on Unexpected Death in Infancy (SIDS in the USA) with the underlying thesis of there being some maturity-related reflexes arising in the upper respiratory tract leading to apnoea. Almost all speakers postulated different possible mechanisms for SIDS, very few of which would appear to be verifiable by a pathologist at necropsy. There were curious gaps in the subject matter of the

conference. Thus, while there is an extensive description of the functioning of the vocal cords, there is no paper or discussion on the necrosis of the vocal cords that has been repeatably documented in many infant deaths.

Five years ago this work would have made fascinating reading. At the moment it will be of interest to the newcomer to the subject of upper airway physiology related to child deaths, but to older students of the art it is a historical document illustrating our ignorance of many aspects of this part of the body of infants.

J. L. EMERY

The Essentials of Paediatric Surgery. By Harold Nixon and Barry O'Donnell. (Pp. 368; illustrated. £6.20.) London: Heinemann, 1976.

Many readers of the *Archives* will already be familiar with the two previous editions of this book. However, it is worth drawing to the attention of anyone who does not know it. It is a neat, lucid, concise account of common paediatric surgical problems—well written and excellently illustrated, the line drawings being particularly good. It is perhaps best on congenital malformations, which are so important in paediatric surgical practice. The approach is that of the general paediatric surgeon, and the book does not really cover some specialist aspects such as cardiac surgery and neurosurgery. This is a most valuable work for the paediatrician or trainee; it is also useful for students and nurses. It is excellent value for money.

R. J. ROBINSON