leukaemia, recording the reactions and responses of these children. One chapter takes the form of a play, the characters being the children, their parents and the hospital personnel, and seeks to illustrate the way the children learn about their disease process and how they cope with the knowledge that they are going to die. There is a detailed analysis of the phases through which the children pass. Dr Langner shows that in her study even children as young as 3 years know they are dying and maintain, with parents and hospital personnel, a mutual pretence. In this book no child survived which poses the question as to when the study was carried out. There is little doubt that during recent years a greater understanding of children's awareness of the seriousness of their illness and also the justifiably greater optimism regarding prognosis have combined to develop a much freer discussion of possible death in paediatric oncology units. This book is related to American culture and perhaps succeeds in highlighting the differences between it and the average attitudes of parents in Great Britain, and indicates that it is harder to die young in that society because of the greater need to succeed. The author emphasises the difficulties experienced by parents and doctors in acknowledging the inevitable death of a child—the parents because their role as 'rearers' can no longer be sustained and doctors because it indicates failure. She does not, however, seem to suggest that these are natural responses.

If Dr Langner's hope is to help all concerned to deal with death in childhood, I think she succeeds only in part when she details in her conclusions that the children will control the situation and will 'play the game'. She does not state that death in childhood is a rare occurrence in any society in the western world today and that whatever our role in that society we need help in progressing through the event. This book makes interesting reading and certainly helped me to polarise my ideas and make me more

aware of other people's difficulties in understanding how some of us have more problems than others in coping with death.

PAT MORRIS JONES

Textbook of Paediatrics. 2nd edition. Edited by J. O. Forfar and G. C. Arneil. (Available in one or two volumes. Single volume: Pp. 822; illustrated+tables. £50.00. Two volumes: Pp. 952; illustrated+tables. £60.00.) Churchill Livingstone: Edinburgh. 1978.

The first edition of Forfar and Arneil was widely and justifiably acclaimed as a major achievement for British paediatrics, providing a large comprehensive textbook of paediatrics comparable in coverage and quality with its American counterparts. It was fully reviewed in *Archives* (49, 504, 1974). It must be unusual for a book whose first edition was so generally praised to undergo so many changes in content and layout in its second edition. The first impression is that it is a completely different book. The page size is substantially larger, and although the number of pages is somewhat reduced, overall it is definitely bigger. The book has been completely reset with smaller type but often with clearer headings and more generous spacing, so it is probably easier to find one's way around quickly.

The editors and contributors have certainly been as busy as the publishers in revising and adding to the first edition. The most obvious changes are the addition of chapters on paediatric oncology and gynaecology, and of a very detailed table of drug doses and indications—all welcome and useful. However it is really necessary to compare the two editions side by side to realise the extent to which the old chapters have been updated or added to. Not surprisingly the chapter on prenatal paediatrics contains much more, but even the accounts of subjects in which there have not been major advances contain good new material. An example is the discussion of

the orthopaedic aspects of cerebral palsy. There are many new tables and many of the old ones have been expanded, so they now contain a great wealth of information (although sometimes in uncomfortably small print). Once again I was impressed by the depth and scholarship of many of the chapters.

Our reviewer's only important criticism of the first edition concerned the quality of reproduction of the photographs. It is no better in the new edition, and in places the illustrations give a slightly drab and old-fashioned look to this very up-to-date textbook. In the first edition the x-rays were in a separate section on glossy paper at the end, which our previous reviewer thought sensible, but which seemed to me a rather artificial and makeshift arrangement. In this edition they are placed in the text where they belong. They do not appear to have lost much clarity, but the reproduction is certainly not as good as it ought to be, and this applies particularly to some of the chest x-rays, and the CT scans. Perhaps the publishers can find a better way to cope with this admittedly difficult problem next time. The line drawings are excellent.

Renewed congratulations to John Forfar, Gavin Arneil, and their team of contributors for this splendid achievement, and thanks for the immense labour they have undertaken in both editions.

R. J. ROBINSON

Shorter notice

Neonatal Medicine. By M. L. Chiswick. (Pp. 101; illustrated+tables. £6.20 by post, or £5.50 to personal callers, hardback.) Update: London. 1978.

There are fewer than 100 pages of text, notably succinct, but more than 100 highly apt illustrations, nearly all of them in colour, to give this latest addition to the considerable flow of recent books on neonatal medicine an agreeably individual flavour.