Book reviews

chapters by leading experts in their particular field. These include F B Gibberd on petit mal, L S Basser on benign paroxysmal vertigo, F S Gubbay on the clumsy child, and Sheila Wallace on pyrexial convulsions. John Stephenson contributes a fascinating chapter on cerebellar disorders, with some rather personal views and much condensed useful information. Perhaps another half dozen of the 39 chapters are of almost the same interest and quality, but much of the rest is a disappointment. Barely a quarter of the authors are practising paediatric neurologists, and some of the chapters seem to be based more on knowledge of the literature or on experience with adults than on wide practical experience of children with neurological disorders. Some major subjects like cerebral palsy and epilepsy (other than the specific aspects already mentioned) are dealt with less fully and adequately than one would expect in a textbook of paediatric neurology, which should provide appreciably more than a standard textbook of paediatrics. The work of the developmental assessment centre is well described, and there is a somewhat theoretical chapter on developmental neurology, but there is no full and satisfactory account of developmental assessment and what it contributes to paediatric neurological diagnosis. The chapters on degenerative CNS disorders are somewhat weak and would not provide a great deal of practical help in the recognition of the child who has a progressive disorder and then the diagnosis of which it is. In its first edition, therefore, the book has some of the strengths but many of the weaknesses of multiple authorship. It does not provide a comprehensive and cohesive account of paediatric neurology to stand comparison with the best of its American counterparts.

ROGER ROBINSON

Patient and Family Education. Tools, Techniques, and Theory. Edited by Rose-Marie Duda McCormick and Tamar Gilson-Parkevich. (Pp. 372; illustrated + tables. £9.00 (\$19.00) paperback.) Wiley: Chichester. 1979.

This is a book about health education, an ordered presentation of attitudes and procedures which have developed in the

Children's Hospital, Columbus, Ohio, and the community it serves. Part 1 is concerned with concept and method; part 2 with the practical handling of 70 procedures and situations from taking the temperature (still on the Fahrenheit scale) to the management of diabetes and cystic fibrosis. The precision of these is impressive, but the reasons for including G6-PD deficiency and excluding disturbed behaviour and psychiatric disorders is not explained.

Five of the 7 authors are nurses, and the programme on which the book is based was fashioned in the hospital's department of nursing. It is designed for 'today's health professionals and students' and for 'patients, parents, and staff'.

Such a book may be useful in the present context of paediatrics, paediatric nursing, and parent expectations in the USA; I have serious reservations about its value in Britain. It is 'hospital centred' when we are seeking to bring the hospital into a supporting role to primary care in the community.

It is grounded in traditional physical disease when need is moving towards handicap, disturbed behaviour, and the effect on the child of family dysfunction and breakdown.

Precision is certainly essential for the effective management of illness; the detail of the instructions in this book suggest that patient and family education is not simply a desirable factor in the parent-professional partnership on which rational health care depends, but a necessary means of containing the rising costs of medical care in the USA.

We shall always need to improve our communication with children and parents, but in the UK this is primarily personal not verbal.

This book would persuade us that in addition to the responsibility for personal explanation inherent in all medical and nursing practice we should develop a formal educational system, with all its inflationary demands for time and money, and yet another professional—the parent-educator. And all for a process 'the effectiveness of which is unknown'.

The authors claim that 'today's nurses are providing more health care education than any other group'; it was therefore surprising that the role of the nurse as family interpreter was not central to their educational approach. If this had been the case the book could have been addressed to a precise audience, and by separating the nurse teaching material from direct

parent guidance the present ambivalence could have been avoided.

However, the authors would ask to be judged by their peers both in nursing and health education. Until that is done I hope British paediatric nurses will come out from hospitals into homes, that they will be more ready to accept parents as professional partners in the care of children, and above all that they will never see pamphlets, however well designed, as a substitute for personal advice.

DONALD COURT

Primary Child Care: Book 2. A guide for the community leader, manager, and teacher. By Maurice King, Felicity King, and Soebagyo Martodipoero. (Pp. 194; illustrated + tables. £3.95 paperback.) Oxford Medical Publications: Oxford. 1979.

Those concerned with child health in developing countries and many others will already be familiar with Maurice King's book *Primary Child Care*. That volume however was only the first of four parts of his microplan to help in the training in child health of medical assistants and many others. The second part consisted of 10 sets of 24 slides to be used in conjunction with the first book. These sets are available from TALC Institute of Child Health, 30 Guilford Street, London WC1 1EH, in various forms, the least costly being only £15 (or £9 for those ordering for use in developing countries).

Like other materials from TALC in this form, the slides cost less than the price of a 35 mm film at normal retail price. They are sent out post-free with a full script.

The third part is the book reviewed here, which provides managers—such as district medical officers, senior nurses, and midwives—with a wide variety of instruments for measuring some variables that determine the quality of primary child care.

While primarily aimed at developing countries the concepts developed in this book are likely to be of wider interest. Rather more than half of the book is devoted to three sets of multiple choice questions. For each of the 26 chapters in the workers manual there is a pretest, also a set of questions for the students to practise on and teach themselves, and lastly a set for a post-test when the study of the chapter has been completed.

The fourth part of the microplan and the most innovative, is a system by which the student can obtain immediate feedback on his replies to the multiple choice questions. A kit is supplied containing a stencil from which duplicated sheets can be run off with the letters A B C D E for each of the 32 questions. Also, a perforated plastic sheet is supplied which can be laid over the duplicated sheet and phenolphthalein spirit applied so that the appropriate letter is soaked.

The student is provided with some alkali, such as washing soda, in a coloured fluid, such as coffee, and with a small applicator he applies this to the letter which he considers is the correct answer for the multiple choice question. If he is correct he receives an immediate reward in the form of a bright colour from the inapparent phenolphthalein absorbed on the letter. The perforated sheets are arranged in such a way that there are 8 different combinations of results, so that the student cannot memorise on which letter the phenolphthalein is likely to be absorbed.

Initial experience in Indonesia suggests that this system is a strong motivation for students to learn. This kit will shortly be available from TALC.

DAVID C MORLEY

Technological Developments and Trends in Pediatric Radiology. Progress in Pediatric Radiology, volume 7. Edited by H J Kaufmann. (Pp. 290; illustrated + tables. \$99.50 hardback.) Karger: Basel. 1979.

The editor of this distinguished series writes in his foreword that 'this is the first volume not devoted to a region or an organ system of the child's anatomy. An attempt is made to bring together information on technical advances as they affect the practice of pediatric radiology.'

The first quarter of the book is taken up by a single chapter from Paris on 'CT-scan contribution to the diagnosis of intracranial tumors and mass lesions in infancy and childhood'. This is a careful catalogue, rehearsing each tumour in turn, drawn from the considerable experience of this school. Like many catalogues, it is probably of interest to the expert, but short on insights for the general reader. On the last page (95!) there are paragraphs headed 'Discussion' and

'Final conclusions' which provide interesting summaries—for example no false-negative findings for hemisphere lesions, 3500 CAT examinations with masses found in 10%, but then still leading on to conventional neuro-radiological examinations in one half. And 88 references—clearly a feast for the neuroradiologist concerned with children's intracranial tumours.

The following four chapters are about whole body CAT, abdominal ultrasound, cardiac ultrasound, and hilar tomography in oblique projections. Each chapter in this book is for a different specialist, and for this reason Drs Dixon and Flower will review the first and the last in this list.

The final section is a regular feature of the series: the 'special treatment article'. This happens to be 'Therapeutic catheter procedures' here, but I do not think a therapy topic is intended under the regular heading. Its odd name is in the Clockwork Orange tradition 'and now we give you the special treatment, Sir—ugh'. There is a position paper, followed by critical comments from other authors. Catheter embolisation techniques are currently in the forefront of attention, and indeed they can be life-saving. The position paper and some of the commentators remind us that the paediatric field is small: the Boston Children's Hospital does about one embolisation procedure a month, and about 10 times as many diagnostic angiograms. This is the liveliest part of the book.

I am not sure how much there is here for the paediatrician, as opposed to the neuroradiologist, as opposed to the paediatric radiologist. The book is a careful digest of what is now possible, working through the various imaging techniques. Many doctors will also want to know about usage, and here the brief of the book ends. It puts the right sentiments in this direction. Thus in the section on abdominal ultrasound 'As a multiplicity of imaging modalities develops, there is an increasing need for an integrated approach to a diagnostic imaging problem, so that the complementary nature of the information obtained from each modality can be appreciated. This requires a critical understanding of the strengths and limitations of each method. Continuing work is necessary on objective assessment of the reliability of different methods in particular circumstances and applications.'

That is clearly on the side of the angels in intent, and perhaps the next volume in

the series will battle with what is best done for any particular patient and clinical problem.

THOMAS SHERWOOD

The chapter on 'Extracranial computerised tomography' contains useful information about patient preparation and radiation dose. In these early days of scanning the examples and related discussion are, inevitably, anecdotal. The ease with which CAT demonstrates lung metastases in the costophrenic recesses is shown. A myasthenic patient is shown to have no thymoma but interpretation within and around the soft tissue density of the involuting thymus may not be so simple. In the abdomen the lack of perivisceral fat in children is mentioned together with the consequent loss of CAT organ delineation. This lack of fat allows good ultrasound examinations, and question the role of CAT in jaundice advocated here. Organ delineation might improve with carefully administered oral contrast medium which, although not discussed and apparently not routinely used, is evident on some demonstrated scans. The chapter is a helpful résumé for the general radiologist/paediatrician but does not greatly assist the CAT man in his struggle for accurate diagnosis and rational machine allocation.

A K DIXON

Oblique hilar tomography is of proved value in adults, but not often performed in children. Is it useful here? These authors say yes and provide a plausible group where the thymus 'causes difficulties'—they have 'encountered several situations', but alas there are no illustrations. I suspect the thymus is best demonstrated by good, simple x-rays. What other 'situations'? Lymphoma and inflammatory conditions: there is a good illustration of the value of the technique in assessing mediastinal node enlargement in Hodgkin's disease. The inflammatory group is poorly illustrated, and hardly makes a good case. Is it of much practical help to show big nodes in measles and cystic fibrosis? A final plea is that the authors should use standard anatomical nomenclature when describing the bronchi: what is 'the upper bronchus'?

C D R FLOWER