

exceptionally well described and many include data on subunit structure, molecular weight, substrate specificity, pH optima, Vmax, and Km. Where relevant, evidence is reported from genetic complementation studies using somatic cell hybridisation to demonstrate genetic heterogeneity. Many of the experiments on genetic heterogeneity were conducted in the author's laboratory.

The fourth chapter deals specifically with amniotic fluid and cells, and with reports of prenatal diagnosis of metabolic disorders. As before, citations from the literature are remarkably complete. In addition, results are reported of a study by the author in which he collected data on prenatal diagnosis of genetic metabolic disease in western Europe and Israel until 1 January 1979 from a total of 632 pregnancies.

The fifth and sixth chapters are devoted to 'Prevention of sex-linked diseases' and 'Some aspects of future development'. A wide range of topics is discussed, including DNA recombinant techniques for analysis of amniotic cell DNA, treatment by enzyme replacement, organ or cell transplant, and the techniques of ultrasound, fetoscopy, and fetal blood sampling.

There are 75 appendices; these describe methods for enzyme assays and related techniques, including those of microchemical analysis of small numbers of cells for rapid prenatal diagnosis. The last was largely developed in the author's laboratory. One appendix gives a list of centres in Europe, USA, and Canada which may assist in prenatal diagnosis.

It would be surprising if a first edition containing so many references and data were to be entirely free from errors. This one contains a fair number, mostly trivial, but two concern methods.

This is an outstanding work and should be read and kept as a reference book by paediatricians, clinical geneticists, and all others concerned with genetic counselling.

P F BENSON

A Guide to Cardiac Dysrhythmias in Children. Edited by A Garson, Jr, P C Gillette, and D G McNamara. Clinical Cardiology Monograph Series. Series Editors J W Hurst and D T Mason. (Pp. 198; illustrated + tables. £11.00 hardback.) Grune & Stratton: New York. 1980.

This book has been written to instruct doctors to recognise the most common disturbances of heart rate, rhythm, and conduction disorders in children. A scheme for the interpretation of cardiac dysrhythmias is given and initially this is straightforward, but when it is expanded to cover every possible abnormality it becomes complex. The first half of the book provides a wealth of hand-drawn electrocardiograms of all dysrhythmias and the abnormalities shown are clearly indicated. The second half is divided into three sections: the first shows illustrations and gives short case histories of patients with disturbances of heart rate and rhythm, the second shows disturbances in cardiac conduction, and the third describes artificial pacemakers.

Two loose cards are provided. One gives the schemes for interpretation of the electrocardiogram and the other a useful table of drug dosages on one side and normal standards of electrocardiograms on the other.

This book would be of most value on an intensive care ward for instruction and

reference rather than on a library shelf but I would sound a word of warning that those using it should be careful to treat the patient and not only the electrocardiogram! There are short notes about treatment of the various dysrhythmias but there is little discussion about the treatment to be used in different circumstances—for example one would use DC conversion immediately in a sick infant with supraventricular tachycardia but an older child with a less prolonged attack may respond satisfactorily to digoxin.

OLIVE SCOTT

Shorter notice

The Challenge of Urinary Tract Infections By A W Asscher. (Pp. 210; illustrated + tables. £15.00 hardback.) Academic Press: London/Grune & Stratton: New York. 1980.

This short and informative book derives most of its good features from the fact that it has been written by one, well informed author. It contrasts happily with the turgid repetition found in many recent books on urinary tract infection which are products of conference proceedings. There is a stimulating mixture of history, good clinical sense, and new research findings. Aspects of childhood urinary tract infection are well reviewed although the information about the technicalities of urine collection, investigation of the urinary tract, and detailed treatment are more applicable to adults; this limits its usefulness for paediatricians. Nevertheless anyone really interested in urinary tract infection will enjoy this book, and even those who think they know the subject well will find something new and fresh to consider.