

prevent epilepsy would be so large, time-consuming, and costly that at present there does not seem to be any prospect of it being done. The book ends with a bibliography listing 687 articles about febrile convulsions.

This is the most up-to-date survey currently available of the problems presented by febrile convulsions and it should be read by all doctors who care for children with this disease although, since an attempt is made to present each side of every argument, they will find both wheat and chaff in close approximation and will need to be able to distinguish between them.

D P ADDY

**An Introduction to Paediatric Neurology.** By G Hosking. (Pp. 252 incl. index; illustrated+tables. £11.50 hardback, £5.95 paperback.) Faber & Faber: London. 1982.

This welcome little book is written for nurses, therapists, social workers, and teachers; it is perhaps too much of a potted medical text to be ideal. Although it covers the field adequately, describes the right disorders, and has good diagrams and a glossary, there is little advice on what a therapist can do to help far less a teacher; and the balance sometimes seems wrong; surely status epilepticus or reading retardation needs more space than myotubular myopathy or the Lesch Nyhan syndrome? Most of all I missed the principles of the subject; without some feeling for the interplay of brain development and pathology it would be hard either to learn the facts set out here or to put them into practice. I felt at times that distillation not desiccation might have been the better way to reduce such a fine bunch of grapes to its essentials, but the raisins are wholesome enough and I hope it is a success.

DAVID GARDNER-MEDWIN

**Paediatrics.** By N D Barnes and N R C Robertson. (Pp. 130 incl. index; illustrated+tables. £14.95 hardback.) Update Publications: London. 1981.

This new book by two Cambridge paediatricians deals with certain aspects of children's illness encountered by doctors engaged in primary care and is a compendium of articles which originally appeared in the magazine *Update*, now

revised and expanded. The subjects covered are some of the more important ones encountered in the community such as growth, immunisation, infant feeding, and the common childhood infections.

There are chapters on organ diseases—such as those of the gut, kidneys, and pancreas. The common enough problem of convulsions is dealt with concisely with the differential diagnoses of faints and 'funny turns'. All general practitioners are faced with the problems of child abuse or neglect; these too are included together with some of the acute problems which come their way. There is no attempt to make this a complete textbook of paediatrics; so many of the diseases encountered in the hospital receive no mention, and there is little about handicap, cerebral palsy, mental retardation, or squints. The far less common condition of cystic fibrosis has three pages, perhaps because the problems of this illness are so extensive. Respiratory tract problems are well covered but exanthemata are only mentioned in passing in the chapter on immunisation. The common problems of sleep, not eating, or the converse over-eating are briefly dealt with and school problems also are given a place.

There is bound to be a lack of balance in a book which is a collection of articles, and some important problems such as those of the skin and bones are omitted. One of the very attractive features is the succinct list of references and further reading at the end of every chapter; these have been carefully chosen. The book is beautifully produced and illustrated, and there are many excellent coloured photographs and charts, tables, flow diagrams, and radiographs. The style is bold and didactic, which makes for easy reading, thus making it an engaging introduction to paediatrics for the medical student, but those wanting a textbook of paediatrics will either look elsewhere or supplement their reading. Nevertheless, the attractive presentation is likely to guarantee a good readership.

O P GRAY

**Scientific Foundations of Paediatrics**, second edition. Edited by J A Davis and J Dobbing. (Pp. 1095 incl. index; illustrated+tables. £75.00 hardback.) Heinemann Medical: London. 1981.

This edition of an important book is a worthy successor to the first one. In no sense is this a textbook of clinical

paediatrics; as the authors hoped it is a composite of the scientific background concerned with the essential distinguishing characteristic of the medicine of childhood, and its concern with growth and development. It has been extensively revised with the addition of further contributors. There are now five sections, the important change being that growth and development of behaviour and personality has been given a section of its own, separating it from the section on growth and development of physical systems and giving this important subject a more thorough treatment. Thus the book as a whole achieves a very satisfactory presentation of very varied aspects of the studies in paediatric medicine in a single volume, and has very extensive reference lists making it a worthy, if not outstanding, part of the Scientific Foundations series.

It is impossible to comment on the complete content of this book; some chapters make very heavy reading indeed, but the important essay on the 'Beginnings and fruition of the self' is very informative and a joy to read. The editors have ensured good use of diagrams and illustrations, and they are to be congratulated on their choice of excellent contributors; it is beautifully printed. This is an essential reference book for every paediatric department and medical library.

J W SCOPES

**Textbook of Gastroenterology and Nutrition in Infancy.** In two volumes. Edited by E Lebenthal. (Pp. Vol. 1, 699 including index; Vol. 2, 483 including index; illustrated+tables. 2 volume set \$133.28 hardback. Raven Press: New York. 1981.

One of the exciting and important areas of scientific interest during the last decade has been our increasing understanding of the interdependence of gastrointestinal development and function upon nutrition. This is of particular concern to all who work with the young, and is a field in which paediatricians have made significant contributions. This has been acknowledged in several ways, not least of which is this considerable work by one hundred authors, most of them from North America.

As stated in the preface the books are intended for all who care for infants in the perinatal period. They aim to provide an overview of the rapidly expanding interface of knowledge which links infant nutrition with development and disease of