Book reviews

Childhood Diabetes. The Facts. By O Craig. Pp. 163: £5.95 hardback. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982.

In contrast to the author's previous writings on the subject this book is aimed at parents of diabetic children. Topics covered include causes of diabetes, physiology of insulin secretion, monitoring diabetic control, insulin preparations and injection techniques, effects of behaviour and emotion on diabetic control, and the diabetic diet. The best chapter is that entitled 'The long view'. Here the author puts the disorder and its treatment into perspective. He discusses early reactions to diagnosis, growth and adolescence, marriage, life expectancy, and the risks of diabetic complications. Two chapters dealing with the causes of diabetes and insulin physiology are far too detailed for the lay reader, although very useful for medical students. The section on insulin strengths is already dated and should be reviewed in a subsequent edition in the light of the change to U 100 insulin. There is also a useful chapter entitled 'Special points in diabetic care'. This includes the effects of intercurrent illness and major surgery on diabetic control, tips on travel for the diabetic, insurance policies, and the dangers of smoking. The final chapter is on diet; it is detailed, practical, and adopts a sensible approach to the question of dietary fibre.

This book is well written, easy to read, and contains many amusing anecdotes which are so characteristic of Dr Craig's writings and talks. Will parents read it? Those who are motivated and well informed certainly will and will find it extremely helpful. Parents attending my clinic will be recommended to purchase this reasonably priced book. Unfortunately, those parents who do not learn from the spoken word, let alone the written word, will not benefit from this excellent book, even though they would have most to gain from it. In addition, I would also recommend this book as compulsory reading for medical personnel concerned with the care of diabetic children, be they health visitors, dietitians, social workers, or (and above all!) paediatricians.

I A HUGHES

The Child with Multiple Birth Defects. By M M Cohen. Pp. 189: \$39.68 hardback. New York: Raven Press, 1982.

What do you do if you see a child with a peculiar facial appearance, very broad thumbs, bifid big toes, and an extra nipple? Probably you turn to Smith *Recognizable patterns of human malformation*, (third edition. Saunders: Philadelphia, 1982) if you think it is a syndrome and want to try and discover which it is, or indeed if you recognise that it is the Rubinstein-Taybi syndrome and want to check. If, however, you are interested in the pathogenesis or rationale of syndromes, then your task has hitherto been difficult.

Now we have a book that systematically covers the pathogenesis of syndromes, with chapters on the distinction between malformations, deformations, and disruptions (good); syndrome prototypes; the nature of syndrome delineation; aetiological and pathogenetic heterogeneity (very good); a clinical approach to syndrome diagnosis; dysmorphic growth and development; neoplastic aspects of syndromology; mental deficiency and syndromology; psychosocial aspects of syndromology (very good); syndrome concepts, designations, and taxonomy (weak); and finally anthropometric and statistical aspects.

Any paediatrician keen to understand syndromes rather than just attach labels will be interested in this book. It is well presented, fairly easy to follow, and beautifully illustrated. There are only two defects. One is that the early part of the book is particularly suffused with turgid and bewildering jargon that confuses rather than clarifies. For example, 'variant-additive patterns', 'intrinsic malformational deformation', and 'dyshistogenetic syndromes'. I advise the reader to ignore the terminology, a sort of teratological equivalent of SI units, and stick to the text. The other more serious defect is that opinions and data are sometimes very uncritically presented as fact. This especially applies to some of the tables, where the reader is often barred from studying the facts for himself by the omission of references.

Only a passionate dysmorphologist would want a personal copy, but this

excellent book ought to be available in paediatric departments or special care baby units, for it is likely to stimulate as well as inform.

T J DAVID

Atlas of children's growth. Normal variation and growth disorders. By J M Tanner and R H Whitehouse. Pp. 206: £145 hardback. London: Academic Press, 1982.

This is a monumental book. In it are recorded the studies of human growth conducted by Jim Tanner and Reg Whitehouse between 1948 and 1982. The major part is devoted to a detailed account in text, charts and photogrammetric pictures of the growth of 32 normal boys and 20 normal girls, selected from the full cohort of several hundred, to illustrate the variability of development and mature body build. Subsequent chapters describe growth at puberty, similarities and differences between twins and siblings, changes between 20 and 35 years and finally some endocrine, skeletal, and other pathological conditions affecting growth.

The book is a fitting monument to a unique longitudinal study in human biology, which has provided much of the basic canon of knowledge concerning growth and development, normal and abnormal. It is monumental also in size and, inevitably, in price. Biologists and clinicians with a special interest in growth will wish to visit this monument not only for information but also for scientific inspiration; their admiration will be mixed with awe.

N D BARNES

Virus Infections of the Gastrointestinal Tract. Edited by D A J Tyrell and A Z Kapikian. Pp. 486: Sw Fr 170 hardback. New York: Dekker, 1982.

The 1970s saw a remarkable explosion in knowledge of virus infections of the gastrointestinal tract in man. This great advance was due to the application of electron microscopy to the study of viruses. In 1972 the 27 nm Norwalk virus

was detected in stools by electron microscopy, and in 1973 the rotavirus was visualised in duodenal specimens taken from children with gastroenteritis and later was found in diarrhoeal stools. The enormous growth in knowledge since then of these and other viruses of the gastrointestinal tract has now been brought together for the first time in one comprehensive textbook by David Tyrrell and Albert Kapikian. This is a very valuable single-source book for anyone interested in aetiology, epidemiology, and physiology of viral gastroenteritis. It gives an account of modern diagnostic techniques for such viruses and a comprehensive list of all viruses currently known. It also gives a helpful chapter reviewing acute diarrhoeal disease caused by bacteria, written by Bradley Sack. The book is right up to date with an excellent last chapter containing the latest information on viral gastroenteritis. This informs us that the efficient propagation of human rotavirus has now been achieved, representing a major breakthrough in rotavirus research. There are also important chapters on gastrointestinal viruses in animals, as collaboration between those engaged in human and veterinary medicine in this field has been remarkably fruitful.

The book is clearly and lucidly written, with excellent illustrations. It is highly recommended to clinicians interested in this area as well as to virologists and research workers. It should be on the shelves of all hospital libraries.

J A WALKER SMITH

Pediatric Psychology. An Introduction for Pediatricians and Psychologists. By John V Lavigne and William J Burns. Pp. 400: £22.80 hardback. New York: Grune & Stratton, 1981.

There is a need to help paediatricians and others who work professionally in paediatric clinics and wards to understand and manage better the psychiatric problems which are so prevalent in the children treated there. This large book written by two American clinical psychologists has this purpose. Unfortunately in the view of the reviewer it is unlikely to succeed in helping, and may even put off those who are interested, because of what it has to say and the way in which it is written. It begins with an outline of three different theoretical approaches to childhood behaviour problems essentially derived from the work of Piaget, Freud, and Skinner. This is a particularly poor

section full of jargon and almost incomprehensible to one who has spent a quarter of a century studying these schools of thought. The list of references at the end of the chapter is particularly frustrating because it is not in alphabetical order and does not even quote B F Skinner who is mentioned in the text!

The next section is concerned with assessment. Although it contains some useful information about interviewing children and their families, there is so much that is irrelevant to straightforward clinical assessment that the reader is bewildered. A rather inadequate chapter on mental handicap follows. Then comes a section on so-called organic brain disorders, although it is mostly concerned with hyperactivity, tics, and the doubtful subject of minimal brain dysfunction. Much of the discussion seems incredibly old fashioned by today's standards. One had imagined that many of the ideas expressed were long dead and buried. But apparently this is not the case. One could go on taking each chapter of the book in turn making similar criticisms. It is difficult to see what use a book like this could possibly serve.

IAN BERG

Pre-school to School: a Behavioural Study. By N Richman, J Stevenson, and P J Graham. Pp. 228: £13.50 hardback. London: Academic Press, 1982.

This is a valuable book from several points of view. It is not only thus because of the reliable and extensive way in which it studies the behaviour of young children, but is of considerable importance because it finds evidence which challenges many long held beliefs and attitudes within the catering professions about disturbance in the early years.

Its starting point is a study of a total population of three year olds. Two hundred of the 700 children in the first part of the study are then followed at age 4 and 8. One hundred of these are identified as disturbed in the original study and 100 are controls. The children and their families are extensively studied at each stage using well-established screening, testing, and interviewing techniques.

The book, though filled with many facts, figures, and statistics, is enjoyable to read, thanks partly to the expedient of illustrating many points with very short synopses of the children and their families. In this way all the contents help

to extend one's knowledge of children at these ages and would be valuable to any professional working with children. What is especially useful, because it is usually lacking in studies on behaviour, is that the study is particularly designed so that longitudinal aspects can be examined by looking at the continuity and discontinuity of problems and the factors relating to these.

The authors find a notable persistence of problems which conflicts with the reassuring stance taken by many professionals that pre-school children grow out of their difficulties.

The other value of the book is a reference that can be turned to for many pertinent facts which have therapeutic relevance. The reader can look up the prevalence of particular behaviour in three year olds, the likely persistence of this, and what factors may affect it.

In short, this is an important book to which all professionals dealing with very young children should have access.

J C STUBBS

Ultrasonography of Pediatric Surgical Disorders. By T G Canty, G R Leopold, and D A Wolf. Pp. 268: £32.80 hardback. New York: Grune & Stratton, 1982.

The rapid development of ultrasonography in paediatric surgical practice over the past decade is illustrated in this book. The content deals initially with a brief discussion of theory and techniques followed by some examples of the use of ultrasonography in prenatal diagnosis. The main part of the book is devoted to a series of sections which cover the gastrointestinal tract, the intra-abdominal organs, the genitourinary tract excluding scrotal abnormalities, and a few miscellaneous conditions in which ultrasound has been applied with some benefit.

There is one illustration of prenatal hydrocephalus but no further discussion or illustration of the value of ultrasonography in defining intracranial pathology postnatally. Intrathoracic and in particular cardiac applications for ultrasonography are not dealt with in this book. However, in the areas covered the text is clear and the illustrations are of a high quality. Clinicians will be helped in the interpretation of the new picture galleries produced with ultrasonography. This useful non-invasive investigation is proving of great value in paediatric practice.

The rapid evolution of the techniques