on the barium swallow, and the indications for a lateral chest radiograph are missing. The final chapter on imaging is very brief; the ultrasound section does not give any indication of the technique required nor does it address the difficult problem of the reliability of this modality.

The title of the book is misleading as what is essentially covered is 'How to obtain paediatric x rays (images)'. This book will be most useful to radiographers both in training and also in post but its use even to trainee radiologists from a radiological/paediatric point of view will be rather limited. In the first 200 pages of the book there is virtually no attempt to put into perspective the use of ultrasound, radionuclear imaging, and computed tomography.

I GORDON

Muscle Biopsy. A Practical Approach. By V Dubowitz. Pp 720: £45.00 hardback. Balliere-Tindall, 1985.

This is not just a book for pathologists. A rapid advance in the diagnosis of muscle disease began in the 1950s when clinicians like R D Adams, Milton Shy, and J N Walton readopted the 19th century habit of studying the pathology as well as the patient. Histochemistry gave a major new impetus, and the authors of the first (1973) edition of this book, Professor Dubowitz and Dr M H Brooke, were at the forefront of the histochemical revolution. Their book caught the crest of the wave of developing interest in muscle disorders and set modern standards of practice.

Professor Dubowitz alone has taken on the revision for the second edition. It is largely rewritten and much expanded. There are new chapters on electron microscopy and the new techniques of immunocytochemistry by C A Sewry and R Fitzsimons. Many of Dr Brooke's special contributions to the first edition have been retained, although his characteristic histochemical bar graphs, which never quite caught on in clinical practice, have been left out. The hallmark of the book is its complete mastery of both the clinical and pathological sides of the subject, and every one of the many hundreds of illustrations of pathology in the major systematic section of the book is related to a case history, greatly enhancing the book's value as a permanent source.

As always when an author is exhaustive and up to date there is scope for disagreement about matters of emphasis and classi-

fication, but there is no doubt that this is the authoritative work on the subject, and especially so for paediatric readers who are fortunate that the author's main experience is with children. The surgical and laboratory techniques are given in detail and nearly one third of the book is devoted to these and to the general principles of muscle pathology, including a brief user's manual called 'How to read a biopsy'. There is still no substitute for the author's two other related books *The Floppy Infant* and *Muscle Disorders in Childhood* where the emphasis is on clinical matters. But in every good muscle unit the clinicians take part in the muscle biopsy interpretation, and this book will help you to join them. If you think you haven't time you should not be doing muscle biopsies at all.

D GARDNER-MEDWIN

Handicapping Conditions in Children. Edited by W Gillham. Pp 120: £7.95 paperback. Croom Helm Ltd Publishers, 1985.

The aim of this book (edited and mainly written by a psychologist), described as the key book in the Croom Helm Special Education series, is to provide an overview of the commonest handicapping conditions. In that the book is intended to be read by a wide audience of professionals, parents, and students the aims are fulfilled admirably.

This is a lucidly written, short book (120 pages) and can be read easily from cover to cover. There are eight chapters covering: mental handicap, language disorders, deafness, visual handicap, cerebral palsy, epilepsy, spina bifida, and autism. For each disorder there is a balanced account of the medical, social, and educational issues. It is particularly strong on principles of remediation and educational provision. The explanations of the nature of the handicap in terms of how it affects the child's functioning in everyday life and how the handicap affects the family are excellent. The medical aspects are dealt with at a very basic but informative level, which parents in particular will find very useful.

This beautifully concise book can be strongly recommended to workers in the field of handicap, especially paramedical staff working in child development centres. Also I think it would be a useful introduction to handicap for medical students and paediatricians in training

S H ROUSSOUNIS

Iatrogenic Disorders of the Fetus, Infant and Child. Vol 2. Edited by E G Kassirer. Pp 500: DM 560 hardback. Springer-Verlag, 1985.

Most doctors would be forced to concede the truth of Oscar Wilde's aphorism that 'Experience is the name men give to their mistakes'. Certainly, the dramatic advances of recent years in the management of prematurity, malignant disease, and major malformations have not been achieved without a price.

This excellent book, the second of two volumes, sets out to catalogue the complications, failures of treatment, and residual problems associated with current surgical management. Its title, however, is rather misleading—suggesting a radiological textbook of limited appeal. In fact it is generously illustrated with numerous diagrams and photographs in addition to radiographs. Furthermore, its scope extends far beyond diagnostic radiology. Volume 1 has previously covered the complications of diagnostic and invasive radiology, neonatal and paediatric intensive care, and paediatric oncology. The newly published second volume is concerned largely with surgical problems.

The opening chapter, which deals with complications affecting the airway, thorax, and diaphragm, illustrates the relevance of the book to so many areas of current paediatric practice. The complications of endotracheal intubation (particularly subglottic stenosis) are considered in depth as are those of tracheostomy care and pleural drainage. Other topics include inhaled foreign bodies, bronchoscopy, oesophagoscopy, pulmonary resection, diaphragmatic hernia, and eventration of the diaphragm.

The second chapter, on cardiac surgery, emphasises the shift towards definitive correction of complex defects in the neonatal period or infancy. There are some excellent diagrams and radiographs of the standard cardiac operations. Surgery of the upper gastrointestinal tract, abdominal wall, liver, and biliary tract is then covered comprehensively in an 80 page chapter culminating in a list of no less than two hundred references. In this and subsequent chapters the authors provide us with a balanced review of the published work rather than didactic statements. Their interpretation of iatrogenic disease includes pitfalls of diagnosis in addition to the sequelae of medical intervention.

A chapter on colorectal surgery maintains the standard. Two chapters are devoted to the urinary tract, one of which

deals specifically with urinary diversion and undiversion. The complications of 'medical' procedures—for example, percutaneous renal biopsy and suprapubic aspiration—are considered as well as those of formal surgical operations. The last two chapters cover orthopaedic surgery and neurosurgery, the latter benefiting from an excellent section on cerebrospinal fluid shunt malfunction.

Dr Kassner has performed a valuable service for clinicians in paediatric specialties by drawing together a vast amount of relevant but often inaccessible information. Every paediatric surgeon and radiologist should have access to this book—as should every paediatrician who ever refers a child for specialised surgery.

D F M THOMAS

Recent Advances in Perinatal Medicine. Vol 2. Edited by M L Chiswick. Pp 210; £24.00 hardback. Churchill Livingstone, 1985.

The field of perinatal medicine continues to advance at such a pace, and on such a broad front, that the regular appearance of a book such as this one represents the only hope that most of us have of keeping up to date. Malcolm Chiswick has I think produced a very well balanced second volume, with 10 chapters ranging from early fetal life to the preschool years.

The first chapter is about fetoscopy; its authors are experienced with the technique and it is helpful to have their current appraisal of its place in prenatal diagnosis. The second chapter concerns the obstetric dilemmas presented by preterm labour, and it is excellent for its critical approach to the published works. The third chapter discusses the controversial and confused subject of the use of beta receptor agonists to prevent preterm labour. The fourth chapter deals with the effects of maternal systemic lupus erythematosus, thrombocytopenia, myasthenia gravis, and Graves'

disease on the fetus and newborn; it is usefully orientated towards the management of these difficult conditions. Chapter five appraises the role of hormones and peptide growth factors in the control of fetal growth, and chapter six continues the growth theme with a look at growth in the preterm infant, the nutritional requirements for it and how these can be met in practice. The seventh chapter is an objective look at the 'bonding' phenomenon. Chapter eight concerns the retinopathy of prematurity, with a strong emphasis on vitamin E treatment. Chapter nine addresses the vital question of how we might prevent intraventricular haemorrhage, and the final chapter, which is one of the best, is about neurodevelopmental outcome among low birthweight infants.

The standard of writing is good throughout, and most chapters cite about one hundred references. The book should be regarded as a 'set book' for all involved in the perinatal field.

P R F DEAR

Child Health Surveillance. Council of Europe, Strasbourg 1985. Pp 146: paperback.

This book is produced by a select committee of experts on child health surveillance from 10 European countries. Its main terms of reference were to describe in detail the programmes in operation in Europe, to identify the guidance issued to bodies undertaking child health surveillance, and to report on research undertaken in Europe to evaluate surveillance programmes. There are five main sections to the report: General Considerations, Content of Child Health Surveillance, Services and Personnel, Education for Health, and Research and Evaluation.

The first section is by far the best. Although contributing nothing new, it provides a forceful and well argued account of the policies underlying child health surveillance.

The second section on the content of surveillance is rightly the longest in the book. I, however, find it confusing in that it mixes elements of theory and practice, idealism and personal opinion. Quite a number of the recommendations would differ from currently accepted practice in this country. For example, hearing testing is not recommended until 9 months, which would generally be regarded as too late; it is suggested that a cover test for squint should be carried out by nursing staff, though many would find this a most difficult clinical test. There is an emphasis on repetitive general examination by doctors at more frequent intervals than is currently practised in most districts. Although the roles of parents and community nurses are acknowledged, the development of their contribution towards surveillance is not given sufficient prominence. Overall, the practice of child health surveillance in the United Kingdom has developed somewhat beyond the description given in this section.

The third section gives proper prominence to the need for interdisciplinary work involving health, education, and social services, and discusses some of the difficulties in following this goal.

The fourth section expands the theme of education for health as an integral part of policy.

The fifth section highlights the requirements for good data collection to establish needs and to follow changing patterns. Screening programmes should be carefully evaluated to establish their validity.

An appendix summarises the format and some of the results from the major British cohort studies.

Overall, the book is rich in terms of general principles but disappointing in the details of practice. Perhaps this is inevitable in any attempt to synthesise a single set of recommendations from a series of countries whose systems of surveillance must vary quite widely.

LEON POLNAY