

find fault with details; the perfect textbook covering an entire subject has yet to be written. What the potential purchaser will want to know is: Is this the sort of book I am looking for?

Because it is, in effect, a first edition incorporating new ideas, Barnett's book does offer advantages over other textbooks on paediatrics. The attempt to cover the physiological and biochemical bases of diseases have in the main been successful; but the psychological views are somewhat superficial. The social aspects of paediatrics are also not discussed in any great detail, and, of course, the social services available in Britain are not dealt with at all. (In passing it is worth pointing out that American paediatricians appear to have much of which to be envious in the facilities available to those of us—general practitioners, local authority medical officers and paediatricians—who are responsible for child health in this country. The 'new paediatrics' which is being evolved in the States has much to learn from British experiences of the past 70 years.)

The type is clear and easy to read. The popular double column page is used. There are several diagrams of the type usually found in scientific papers which are easy to follow but the photographic illustrations are poor. At the beginning of the book there are eight pages of colour illustrations. They would not be missed if they were omitted.

There is an index but it is not very helpful. For example, there are two references to enuresis; one during acute illness, the other as a psychopathological symptom. The text on the first aspect is brief; it merely indicates the occurrence. The second appears under psychological abnormalities of growth. It commences: "This condition has been discussed elsewhere." Where? Perhaps the author is referring to other books on the subject, because the index at the back is no help. (The reviewer checked alternative headings: toilet training refers to the same pages as enuresis and bed-wetting refers us back to the original heading.)

General practitioners in Britain and parts of the Commonwealth still play a major part in the child health services of their country. When they practise in groups at least one of them usually takes a special interest in children. For such a general practitioner this book would make a pleasant gift; it should be an addition to his library of books on children's diseases, not the foundation stone.

Lecture notes on neurology. Second edition. IVAN T. DRAPER, M.B., Ch.B., M.R.C.P.E. Oxford and Edinburgh. Blackwell Scientific Publications. 1968. Pp. ix+231. Price 22s. 6d.

This small book is deservedly now into a second edition and forms one of the 'lecture notes' series produced by Blackwell Scientific Publications. This series is designed to present the essentials of a

subject concisely and lucidly as an introduction for the undergraduate and as an aid to rapid revision and convenient reference. In this task the author has succeeded admirably and has produced an excellent book. He has divided his subject matter into three parts, the first being concerned with the structure and function of the nervous system, the second, which is brief, being on history-taking and examination, and the third part presents a summary of the main diseases which affect the nervous system.

Each part is well written and easy to read although full of essential and practical data without being overloaded with unnecessary detail. Part one is enhanced by numerous lucid and helpful diagrams. Part three is naturally the longest section of the book and the author has the happy knack of presenting the signs, symptoms, diagrams and treatment in a very clear and logical fashion making it an easy book for quick reference and guidance. For example, he deals with the differential diagnosis of disease of the spinal cord in three and a quarter pages by means of headings and paragraphs in which the main clinical features are outlined. Although this may suggest that the subject is treated too briefly and must have omissions, this is not so, for it is easy to read and remarkably comprehensive. At 22s. 6d. this introduction to neurology can be strongly recommended alike to medical student and general practitioner.

The eye in general Practice. Fifth edition. C. R. S. JACKSON, M.A., B.M., B.Ch., D.O.M.S., F.R.C.S. Edinburgh and London. E. & S. Livingstone Ltd. 1969. Pp. viii+174. Price 30s. 0d.

Mr Jackson truly remarks that many general practitioners know very little about the eye, and his book is designed to help us to recognize a potentially serious lesion when we meet one. He therefore reminds us that a penetrating wound may be minute, and that "an eye which retains a ferrous metallic fragment within it is invariably lost externally, on account of the chemical changes which take place between the iron and the intra-ocular fluids." Again "the general practitioner is faced with a very difficult problem in many cases of 'the red eye'. He will not often have the knowledge and experience to decide the exact nature of the condition . . . and there is a great temptation to use a drug which will reduce the inflammation and make the patient more comfortable." If there is any doubt as to the integrity of the corneal epithelium, steroids should not be prescribed.

We shall reach for his book when we try to explain to a patient the need for spectacles or the methods of dealing with squint, for his diagrams are as simple as possible; and it may help us, too, to translate polysyllabic ophthalmological reports and opinions.