The principles and practice of medicine. Eighth edition. Edited by SIR STANLEY DAVIDSON, B.A., M.D., F.R.C.P., LL.D., F.R.S. Edinburgh and London. E. & S. Livingstone Ltd. 1966. Pp. xii + 1,342. Price 40s.

This splendid introduction to the principles and practice of medicine has achieved its eighth edition after 14 years. Again with new chapters —on Genetics and Acute Poisoning. The complications of diabetes are dealt with at length. The size of the book is slightly increased and its cost by only 2s. 6d., a remarkable publishing achievement.

Your child is a person. S. CHESS, M.D., A. THOMAS, M.D. and H. G. BIRCH, M.D., PH.D. London. Peter Davies Ltd. Pp. ix + 213. Price 21s.

Three American teachers of medicine at New York University—two psychiatrists and one paediatrician—have collaborated to produce this most interestingly provocative and heterodox book. One cannot fail to recommend it to all concerned with the upbringing of children—whether they be parents, teachers or doctors. It is full of practical commonsense, backed by the authors' wide experience in a long-term study of 231 children from a wide variety of backgrounds whose daily doings they recorded from infancy. Many deep-rooted theories and long practised methods are questioned and some exploded—the authors backing their statements and views with convincingly sound evidence and facts.

The weird, jargon-steeped counsel of post-Freudian pop psychology is heavily criticized, and those parents who have worried in the past because their children have deviated from some mythical norm, will take heart from, and be reassured by, reading this book. Throughout, the authors continually question the theories of most of today's experts and their statement that " Both the published evidence and our own experiences have convinced us that prevailing psychoanalytically-based theories of child care are wrong", will surely not go unchallenged. However one views their opinions the impression left by the authors is one of undoubted sincerity, coupled with the mass of very convincing evidence accumulated in their extensive and detailed ten-year study.

The book is well laid out in 23 chapters, which cover topics in the field of child care ranging from Sex and Modesty to the Handicapped Child and even delves into such old chestnuts as Breast or Bottle? The presentation and style is simple and is specially designed to be read and understood by the lay public.

The authors' reassuring conclusions about the problems that arise during the first six years of childhood are illuminated by the many case histories drawn from their special project, which proves that a major element in the child's successful progress is the parents' ability to recognize and accept the individuality of the child and adapt their care to his specific needs.

Whether one changes one's views or not after reading this book, one cannot fail to be impressed by the logic of the opinions put forward, and to agree wholeheartedly with the authors when they say that this is a psychological approach to parenthood without guilt.