

Notes and activities

BSG Autumn Meeting, Reading

The autumn meeting of BSG was held on the campus of the University of Reading on 24–26 September, with Dr B E Morson as President, and Dr P B Cotton as Vice-President Endoscopy. The local secretary, Mr R Faber, and his team deserve our thanks for an efficiently organised scientific and social programme. In addition to a teaching session devoted to tropical disorders and interventional radiology, the first day offered meetings of the Liver Club, Pathologists' Group, Radiologists' Group, Endoscopy Assistants' and the Royal College of Nursing Group and an inaugural meeting of the Basic Science Group. There was also a joint Endoscopy/Pathology symposium at which Professor G N Tytgat gave the Endoscopy Foundation Lecture on 'Endoscopic management of dysphagia'. On the following days 146 papers were presented and additional work was discussed at a poster session. Professor A E Read was installed as the new President of BSG and Professor C G Clark was chosen as President Elect.

The Fothergillian Medal and Harveian Oration

Those two high distinctions were bestowed by the medical profession this year on Sir Francis Avery Jones. The Fothergillian Medal was awarded to him by the Medical Society of London. The Royal College of Physicians has chosen him this year as their Harveian Orator and he took this opportunity to present a masterly survey of the growth of gastroenterology from Harvey's day to the present time. We offer Sir Francis our warmest congratulations.

Journal of Autonomic Pharmacology

The *Journal of Autonomic Pharmacology* is to appear in Autumn 1980 and will be concerned with the effects of drugs on the mammalian autonomic nervous system. The editor is M D Day, PhD, (Research Laboratories, Reckitt and Colman Ltd, Pharmaceutical Division, Hull). It will be published by Galen Press, Medical and Scientific Publishers, PO Box 2, North Ferriby, North Humberside HU14 3AA, UK, from whom details may be obtained.

Falk-Symposium, Nos 30–32

An Intestinal Week will be held at Titisee, Black Forest, W. Germany, from 24–31 May 1981. It will include the Second International Conference on Intestinal Adaptation (24–26 May), Colonic Carcinogenesis (27–29 May), and Colon and Nutrition (29–31 May). Details may be obtained from Falk-Foundation e.V., Habsburgerstr. 81, D-7800 Friburg i. Br., W. Germany.

Second International Symposium on Mucus in Health and Disease

This symposium will be held at Manchester University, England, from 31 August to 4 September 1981. Organising Committee: Eric Chantler, Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, and James Elder, Department of Surgery, Manchester University, Manchester, UK.

Eighth International Symposium on Gastrointestinal Motility

The 8th International Symposium on Gastrointestinal Motility will take place in Königstein near Frankfurt am Main, F.R. Germany, from 7 to 11 September 1981. The organisers invite contributions, especially with clinical relevance. Abstracts, not to exceed 250 words, should be sent to Dr M Wienbeck, Department of Internal Medicine D, University Hospitals, Moorenstr. 5, D-4000 Düsseldorf, F.R. Germany, before 1 March 1981.

Books

The Mast Cell: its role in health and disease Edited by J Pepys and A M Edwards. Proceedings of an International Symposium, Davos, Switzerland, April 1979. (Pp. 873. Illustrated). Pitman Medical: England. 1979.

To review a book of such length on a subject like the mast cell is beyond the capacity of any ordinary reviewer. The amount of information is too great for anyone to claim honestly that he has read it from end to end.

This publication contains eight parts on, respectively, the mast cell, the mode of action of sodium cromoglycate, respiratory disease, food allergy, eye disease, skin disease, inflammatory bowel disease, and ENT diseases. The content of the presentations varies widely, some

including large amounts of experimental data and others contenting themselves with reviews. The quality of the presentations is equally variable. Generalisation may be a little unfair, but the descriptions of basic scientific work tend to be of higher quality and of more sober judgement than some of the clinical work. Thus there is a tendency of some to claim promising results despite the lack of full analyses, and to found opinions upon uncontrolled observations.

This is not a book from which to obtain a balanced judgement of the role of the mast cell in health and disease, nor could any conference proceedings be expected to be so. It does, however, present a great variety of evidence, some significant and some not so important, about mast cell function and dysfunction.

This is a book for the interested individual to borrow, but not necessarily to buy.

M J S LANGMAN

Correction

Duodenal calcium outputs in health and pancreatic disease, by P T Regan, J-R Malagelada, and E P DiMagno (*Gut* 1980, 21, 614–18.) The dose of cholecystokinin used in these studies was 0.25 CHR U/kg/min, not 0.25 CHR U/kg/h.