Comment

ANTRAL FUNCTION AND VAGOTOMY

Since the publication of our paper 'Effect of vagotomy on the gastric secretion of acid chloride and pepsin in response to an antral stimulus and to insulin and maximal histamine stimulation' (F. I. Tovey, M. Swaminathan, K. Parker, and A. Daniell, *Gut*, 9, 659-666), investigations have further supported the suggestion there that 10% peptone and 3.5% sodium bicarbonate solutions give rise

to 'supramaximal' stimuli with a variable response to vagotomy in a series of 10 cases in which a weaker stimulus (100 ml of 7% alcohol) was used as the antral stimulus. All cases had a highly significant fall in acid and pepsin concentration and output but, again, no significant change in chloride concentration (Table). The results are very interesting in that they show a uniform depression of acid and pepsin, unlike the variable results obtained with peptone and sodium bicarbonate. This supports the suggestions that when the stimulus is 'supramaximal' vagotomy no longer has a uniform depressant effect.

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TABLE

EFFECT OF VAGOTOMY ON ANTRAL STIMULATION WITH 7% ALCOHOL

10 Cases	Secretory Rate (ml/min)	Total Acid		Chloride		Pepsin	
		Concentration (m-equiv/l)	Output (m-equiv/min)	Concentration (m-equiv/l)	Output (m-equiv/min)	Concentration (PU/min)	Output (PU/min)
Pre-vagotomy	6.11	76.7	0.45	139.4	0.84	2.97	17.64
SD	±1.52	±25.3	±0.14	±17.8	±0.54	±0.89	±4.42
Post-vagotomy	3.21	26.2	0.08	161.9	0.51	1.77	5.27
SD	±0.97	±16.5	±0.05	±118.5	±0.29	±1.21	±0.53
t test P	< 0.01	< 0.01	< 0.01	> 0.50	< 0.02	< 0.05	< 0.01

Notes and activities

DR GEOFFREY WATKINSON, FRCP, has recently joined the new Gastrointestinal Centre of the Southern General Hospital, Glasgow, which is closely linked with the Medical and Surgical Professorial Units at the Western General Hospital. The objectives of this centre include the collection of data on important gastrointestinal disorders, a postgraduate training programme in gastroenterology, and clinical research in the laboratory built for the purpose. Dr Watkinson, Secretary of OMGE, will have the opportunity of further developing his great experience in follow-up and epidemiological studies in ulcer, colitis, and gallstones, in addition to clinical and laboratory work. This gastroenterological centre has been developed largely as a result of the efforts of Professor Andrew W. Kay and is likely to prove an important addition to British gastroenterology.

BOOKS *Atlas of Intestinal Stomas*, by Rupert B. Turnbull, Jr, and Frank L. Weakley. Illustrations by Robert M. Reed. This is a comprehensive and extremely well presented atlas relating to the surgical techniques and applications of ileostomy and colostomy. In addition, there is an admirable historical section. The 182 illustrations make their point with great clarity; they are

based on photographs taken at the time of operation and then projected on the screen of a viewer sited alongside the artist's drawing board. This has enabled unnecessary detail to be excluded and the emphasis concentrated on the technique under discussion. This is an atlas which has been prepared as a supplement for younger surgeons who have not had sufficient experience in this highly specialized field during their years of training, and is accompanied by a brief, but adequate, descriptive text. The experiences of English as well as American surgeons have been drawn upon and the atlas clearly represents an up-to-date and comprehensive study which should be available in every main surgical centre. (Henry Kimpton, London. 193s. 6d.)

'*Histochemistry, theoretical and applied*', Volume 1, by A. G. Everson Pearse (J. & A. Churchill, £6 10s.). This is the third edition which is now being subdivided into two volumes, the second one planned for 1970. With the rapid advance of immunochemistry and the role of mucopolysaccharides in the alimentary tract this encyclopaedic work will be much in demand by gastroenterologists.

'*Calorie deficiencies and protein deficiencies*.' Edited by R. A. McCance and E. M. Widdowson (J. & A. Churchill, £4.) With the growing appreciation of protein and calorie malnutrition in alimentary syndromes this report of a conference held in Cambridge in 1967 records a