

Notes and activities

On 30 September 1969, 23 European gastroenterologists met at the University of Erlangen medical clinic to found the **European Gastro Club** (E.G.C.). This association is not intended to increase the already large number of national and international societies, but rather to be an informal society of leading European gastroenterologists and provide them with the maximum information on the results of current investigations carried out by other groups. The aims of the club are to divide its members into a number of working groups and to cooperate in certain scientific problems on a supraregional basis.

Further details can be obtained from Professor L. Demling, director of the Medizinische Klinik mit Poliklinik, 8520 Erlangen, Krankenhausstrasse 12, Postfach 266, Germany.

Progress in Pancreatology, the proceedings of the third symposium of the European Pancreatic Club, held in Prague from 2 to 4 July 1968 has been published by the Czechoslovak Medical Press, Prague. Edited by P. Fric, F. Mais, and R. Ronsky it costs US \$5.00.

Digestive Disease Week, the 1970 Annual General Meeting of the American Gastroenterological Association, will be held from 18 to 23 May at Wentworth-by-the-Sea, Portsmouth, New Hampshire, and the Sheraton-Boston Hotel, Boston, Massachusetts. The plenary session of the Association will be held on 22 and 23 May and will include the Presidential address, selected papers, the memorial lecture given by Dr W. D. M. Paton of Oxford University, England (May 22), and the presentations of the Friedenwald medal to Dr Andrew C. Ivy and the Distinguished Achievement Award to Dr Alan F. Hoffmann (23 May). A post-graduate course: *Pathophysiology of the biliary tract: from canaliculus to Oddi* will be chaired by Dr Franz Ingelfinger (18 and 19 May). The Gastroenterology Research Group Symposium: *Enteric flora and infection* will be held on 21 May in the afternoon, clinical symposia on *oesophageal reflux, diverticular disease, immunology in the diagnosis of cancer of the alimentary tract*, and *nutrition* will be held on the afternoon of 22 May. There will also be undergraduate teaching

seminars taken by Drs James Carey and Warren Beeken (evening of 30 May) and a research forum (21 May). The American Society of Gastrointestinal Endoscopy will hold its meeting on 20 May. A reception and informal buffet will be held at the Sheraton-Boston on Thursday 21 May, followed by a concert.

Intestinal Absorption Information Centre
The Office for Scientific and Technical Information (OSTI) have announced in their newsletter that they have awarded a grant of up to £22,400, over three years from 1 September 1969 to 31 August 1972, to the Intestinal Absorption Information Centre at the University of Sheffield. This project, which has received earlier OSTI support, was initiated by Professor D. H. Smyth FRS of the Department of Physiology and is a joint venture with Professor W. L. Saunders of the Postgraduate School of Librarianship and Information Service.

The newsletter goes on to say: 'The Centre has developed a monthly information service the "Intestinal Absorption Bulletin" (IAB) which is now supplied to over 300 subscribers at £4 a year. Basically a current awareness publication, the bulletin contains brief abstracts and has computer-produced author and subject indexes. During the period of the new grant the Centre will experiment with a number of additional services, related to physiology, directed at various sizes of user populations. Two areas having a potential user population similar to intestinal absorption are cell membrane structure and renal tubule function. The Centre will produce bulletins similar to IAB in these areas, with the close collaboration of subject experts. For smaller populations (50-200 scientists) the output of mechanized disciplinary services will be edited to form a bulletin in order to test whether this type of less sophisticated but comparatively inexpensive service is acceptable. An experiment to produce indexed special bibliographies in a number of subjects will also be mounted in order to evaluate their use as retrospective search tools. The demand for these services will be assessed by the willingness of users to pay for them, and the intention is to make the Centre self-supporting by the end of the grant period. In addition to these services the Centre will also provide an experimental MEDLARS liaison service to find out how far this activity can be integrated into the scope of a specialised information centre.

'Provision is also made in the grant for the continuation of the research in information retrieval techniques which the Centre has been conducting during the past three years. This will include a comparison of citation indexes with subject indexes as a retrieval system for

specialised subjects, and the use of weighted terms for profile construction in mechanised services in order to identify methods for automatic construction of profiles.'

Notes on books

Biochemical Disorders in Human Disease, edited by R. H. S. Thompson and I. D. P. Wootton (3rd edition) Churchill, London, 160s). This is now a classic publication and an essential reference book in all general and specialist libraries. In relation to gastroenterology there are the following chapters: 'Nutritional disorders' (R. Passmore and M. H. Draper), 'Diseases of the liver and biliary tract' (Noel R. MacLagan), 'Diseases of the gastro-intestinal tract' (O. M. Wrong, H. S. Wiggins, and I. D. P. Wootton), 'The pancreas' (Henry T. Howart). Indeed many other sections on lipidoses, anaemias, and amino-acid metabolism and biochemistry of malignant disease will be of value to gastroenterologists.

Cancer of the Digestive Tract, edited by C. Tilden and Warren H. Cole (380 pp, Butterworth, London, 64s), describes the incidence, clinical manifestations, pathology and progress, surgical detail and postoperative management of cancer of various sites, in the alimentary and biliary tracts. There are useful chapters on therapy, chemotherapy and radiotherapy. It is well produced and up-to-date but it is not immediately clear for whom it is written. It is clearly of value as a reference book.

Correction

On page 95 (*Gut*, 11, 91-99) of the February issue we regret that Figure 3a is printed upside down, and in the legend to Figures 4b and 4c the correct symbols are: * = shapes; █ = capsule; ● = marker on umbilicus.