the authors have done much to relate their findings to the human situation. The implications of the results of many of these studies and their application to problems of intestinal absorption and nutrition in the child and the adult are considerable. This volume will be of great value to gastroenterologists interested in the related disciplines of intestinal digestion/absorption and nutrition.

R I RUSSELL

Cirrhosis By John T Galambos. Volume XVII in the series *Major Problems in Internal Medicine*. Edited by Lloyd H Smith, Jr. (Pp. 376. Illustrated. £16.00.) W B Saunders: Philadelphia, London, Toronto. 1979.

In these days of multi-author tomes, with the inevitable overlap and variable quality of presentation, it is refreshing to read a major book by a single experienced and enthusiastic clinician. Dr Galambos has taken on a daunting task, for cirrhosis interconnects so many problems in hepatology that any review must be very broadly based. Inevitably there are areas which are not covered in as much depth as others and some in which his personal view dominates the arguments. The final package, however, is an immensely enjoyable book which is always oriented towards the practising physician.

After a short historical introduction the next six chapters deal clearly with the factors involved in the development of cirrhosis and its sequelae, from aetiology and pathogenesis through pathology and classification to epidemiology and pathophysiology. In these, as in the later sections, his extensive personal experience and research on the development of alcoholic cirrhosis are reflected in the thoughtful and thorough coverage of this topic. A chapter on clinical features includes a practical discussion of the role of liver biopsy in management and its interpretation, some comments often being made with amusing force: a shallow wedge biopsy 'represents nothing more than a layer of subcapsular artifacts sandwiched between two layers of Glisson's capsule'.

Chapters 9 to 12 deal with evaluation and therapy of common complications of cirrhosis from parenchymal failure and portal hypertension to encephalopathy and ascites. The style is that of the experienced clinical teacher, a practical exposition of a personal approach. Not everyone will accept all the guidance offered, but there is a lot of wisdom here.

All in all, a book to be recommended to all physicians because of its ability to communicate and teach at many levels.

A L W F EDDLESTON

Mechanisms of Intestinal Secretion Edited by Henry J Binder. (Pp. 319. Illustrated. \$28.) Alan R Liss, Inc.: New York. 1979. During most of this century the attention of intestinal physiologists has largely been focused on the study of absorption. However, with the recognition in the late 1960s that the profound diarrhoea of Asiatic cholera was due to intestinal secretion, attention has turned back, with increasing fervour, to the investigation of intestinal secretory mechanisms in health and in a variety of diarrhoeal diseases. The time is now ripe, therefore, for a review and this book, the first devoted entirely to this subject, is a valuable résumé by several of the leading workers in this field. It is divided into sections on transport processes in non-intestinal tissues, intracellular control of intestinal secretion, the neurohumoral control of secretion, and the paracellular routes for intestinal secretion. There is a thoughtful chapter by Hladky on concepts of carriers and pores, the role of cyclic nucleotides in intestinal secretion is reviewed by Field and there is a succinct overview of chloride transport in the intestine by Schultz. The exciting prospect that intestinal transport might be influenced or even controlled by local neurological mechanisms is discussed by Powell and Tapper in a chapter on cholinergic/adrenergic interactions, and Burnstock presents the evidence for a role for 'purinergic' nervous control. A very complex picture indeed is presented by additional evidence that other putative neurotransmitters such as VIP and serotonin can also influence secretion and may be involved in control too. This book is clearly presented and the chapters are of a uniformly high standard. The meeting at which these papers were presented occurred in October 1978 and thus the book is reasonably up to date. I can recommend it highly to all interested in gastrointestinal physiology and pathophysiology.

L A TURNBERG

Disorders of Esophageal Motility By A L Hurwitz, A Duranceau, and J K Haddad. (Pp. 179. Illustrated. £12.75.) W B Saunders: Eastbourne. 1979.

This slim volume of 10 chapters is a very thorough review of oesophageal motility

disorders with a very practical clinical approach. The last decade in particular has seen a flood of publications on this subject, especially in relation to manometry of the lower oesophageal sphincter, and such a review is therefore timely. In the United Kingdom oesophageal manometry has seen a rise and fall in clinical use and today remains mainly a research tool; the strong emphasis on manometry of this book therefore reflects the North American scene in this regard.

The volume is well written, though somewhat repetitive, and profusely illustrated. Particularly good are the chapters on manometric techniques (with much sound practical advice), on oropharyngeal dysphagia, and on the effects of surgery. There is a refreshing open-mindedness about such unanswered questions as the relationship between diffuse spasm and achalasia. In some sections the desire to be comprehensive results in a lack of clinical balance. Thus, all possible modes of medical therapy for reflux oesophagitis are listed, with little attempt to discriminate between them. Literature references are almost all from North America; several European studies of cimetidine in oesophagitis could be quoted putting forward the view that it is more effective than is suggested. Gastric irradiation should certainly be clearly identified as a historical curiosity only.

These minor criticisms apart, this review can be strongly recommended, especially for its pragmatic approach.

JOHN SPENCER

Gallstones Edited by M M Fisher, C A Goresky, E A Shaffer, and S M Strasberg. (Pp. 443. Illustrated. \$42.50.) Canadian Foundation for Diseases of the Liver. Plenum Press: New York. 1979.

Symposia in book form often receive a bad press. This one is thoughtfully produced and more interesting than most.

The book, the proceedings of the Fourth International Symposium of the Canadian Foundation for Diseases of the Liver, May 1978, contains 26 chapters by North American and European authors on topics such as gallstone epidemiology, bile and gallstone chemistry, the physiology and biochemistry of biliary secretions and enterohepatic circulation, gallstone pathogenesis, the role of diet and drugs, and the investigation/management of gallstone diseases.

While some of the papers are very specialised, most are general reviews of present knowledge, generally excellent.