Notes and activities

BSG Spring Meeting, Bristol, Avon
The Spring Meeting of the British Society of Gastroenterology was held on the campus of the University of Bristol on 9–10 April, with Professor A E Read as President and Dr P B Cotton as Vice-President (Endoscopy). To Dr K Heaton and his team go the thanks of members and guests for maintaining the high standards of efficient organisation to which our Society has now become accustomed through the unstinting efforts of successive Local Secretaries. This time the scientific and social pleasures of the meeting were enhanced by the beauty and historical interest of the town. The original communications were preceded by the Teaching Half Day devoted to colonic cancer surveillance and by meetings of histopathologists' and radiologists' groups. There were endoscopy sessions on disasters, disinfection, and technology. Some 104 original papers were read before the Society and 12 posters were available for discussion. Dr N W Read gave the Research Medallist’s lecture dealing with mechanisms of diarrhoea. The social programme included a conference dinner, sherry tasting, visits to the Theatre Royal and Bath, and a tour of Bristol. It was a most enjoyable meeting.

Symposia in Basic Gastroenterology
This second symposium of the series ‘Autonomic nerves of the gut’ will be held in London on 22 September 1981, and has been organised by J M Polak, S R Bloom, N A Wright, and M Daly in collaboration with the Medical Department of Glaxo Group Research. Invited speakers include N Le Douarin (Paris), G Gabella (London), B Smith (London), V L Vantrappen (Belgium), J Furness (Australia), and M G Gershon (USA). Details from Dr M Daly, Glaxo Group Research Ltd, Ware, Herts SG12 0DJ.

Indian Society of Gastroenterology
The 22nd Annual Conference of the Indian Society of Gastroenterology will be held in association with the Society of Gastrointestinal Endoscopy of India and the Liver Study Group of India at the Medical College, Trivandrum, Kerala State, India, from 20 to 22 September 1981. Details can be had from Dr N Rajan, Organising Secretary, 22nd Annual Conference ISG, Ward No. 6, Medical College Hospital, Trivandrum-695 011, Kerala, India.

16th Meeting of the European Association for the Study of the Liver
This meeting will be held in Lisbon, Portugal on September 3–5 1981.
Details from Helmer Ring-Larsen, Division of Hepatology, Hvidovre Hospital, University of Copenhagen, DK-2650 Copenhagen, Denmark. (Tel: (45 1) 47 14 11.)

IVth International Symposium of Gastroenterology and Nutrition
An international symposium on ‘Milks intolerances and rejection’ will be held in Nice, 27–28 November 1981. Details may be obtained from Dr A G Harris, Département d'Hépatologie, Gastroenterologie, Hôpital de Cimiez, 4, Av. Reine Victoria, 06000 Nice, France. (Tél. (93) 81 25 25.)

Books
In a field which is expanding as rapidly as gastrointestinal endocrinology, new books must have a very short half life. It is natural therefore to question the need for this book, particularly as several books, mostly symposia proceedings, in this field have been published in recent years. However, having recovered from my initial scepticism, I found this book impressive. In over 1000 pages and some 43 chapters the whole field is covered very well indeed. The topics dealt with include isolation and characterisation of the known gastrointestinal hormones and their synthesis. Receptor interactions, effects on the gastrointestinal tract, and methods of assay are all considered in depth. A section on ‘candidate’ hormones places this group of compounds, awaiting a role, in perspective. This section includes an excellent chapter by Victor Mutt which summarises much of the current work on these putative humors. Most chapters are well written by acknowledged experts in the field and, indeed, it is hard to find a worker who has been omitted. All chapters are very fully referenced and an interesting innovation is the inclusion of a section at the end of each chapter on ‘projections for the future’ where contributors have been asked to indulge in speculation.
The particular merits of this book are that it is exhaustive, authoritative, and up to date. It is very well referenced and hence an excellent source of current views on virtually every aspect of gastrointestinal endocrinology. It is well produced and strongly recommended to anyone interested in the field. L A TURNBERG

Current Gastroenterology Edited by Gary L Gitnick, Volume I. (Pp 463. Illustrated. $35 US. 843-75 elsewhere.) Houghton Mifflin: Boston. 1980. This volume is a successor to Current Gastroenterology and Hepatology, and is separated from its burgeoning sister volume Current Hepatology. The editor has chosen a series of mainly American authors, and, in an interesting attempt to make sure that individual authors do not pursue their favourite hobby horses to the exclusion of other topics—or else describe their own research to an unwelcome extent—each chapter has been submitted to peer review before publication.
The style will be familiar to anyone who has previously read volumes of the ‘Year book . . .’ or ‘Recent advances . . .’ type. The period covered is largely 1978 and 1979. The main chapters deal with the oesophagus, stomach, small bowel, colon, and pancreas. Certain specific topics are also given sections—for example, inflammatory bowel disease and gastrointestinal cancer, surgery, and endoscopy. Sections on gut hormones, nutrition, and relationships of the diseased gut with other body organs complete the book.
The volume is well produced, with a clear and easily-read text, broken up into frequent subsections and paragraphs. The illustrations are plentiful and crisply reproduced. The standard of individual chapters is remarkably high even for a multi-author book of this type.
Two aspects deserve special mention. Firstly, the documentation is excellent, most chapters having 100 or 200 references, some more. Secondly, the authors, perhaps with editorial urging, seem to have gone out of their way to write in an entertaining fashion. The reader shares in their obvious delight at being able to describe such fascinating items as hairy oesophagus or the gay bowel syndrome. Gastroenterologists will certainly find much to interest them in this volume.
R F HARVEY