Books

The liver annual 2, 1982 Edited by I M Arias, M Frenkel, and J H P Wilson. (Pp. 473; illustrated; \$76.75.) Amsterdam: Excerpta Medica, 1982.

This is the second year of this *Liver annual*. Any conscientious reader of this series will certainly be kept abreast with developments in hepatology. The authors of the various sections are experts in their fields, and have been carefully chosen. Similarly, the subjects are relevant. Each essay is not simply a summary of the literature, but includes an interpretation. The present volume includes excellent contributions on hepatic protein metabolism, alcohol and the liver, viral hepatitis, and indeed all the major growing areas in hepatology. There are two problems. The review stops on 30 June 1981, so that the review of the literature is already one year out of date. The enthusiastic research worker will have to keep up with original articles in the journals. The second problem is the almost total lack of illustrative material whether tables or figures. This is presumably house policy, but makes the text much heavier going than it might be. Policy cannot be on cash grounds as the book is well up to the price asked for other better illustrated reviews. This book can be recommended to all practising hepatologists.

SHEILA SHERLOCK

Surgery of the biliary tract By B Niederle. (Pp 552; illustrated; \$73.50.) The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1981.

A considerable amount of effort has been put into producing this book, which is written by one of the most distinguished European surgeons of our time. The references are comprehensive and on the whole up to date.

The book is generously illustrated, and the illustrations are clear. The difficult conditions in which such a work has been produced and translated are not underestimated. Its value is considerable and represents a vast experience from a surgeon of integrity.

H D RITCHIE

Familial inherited abnormalities Clinics in gastroenterology vol. 11, No 1 Edited by J T Harries. (Pp. 234; illustrated; £10.75.) London: Saunders, 1982. The emphasis in this issue of *Clinics* is on inherited

biochemical abnormalities of absorption which manifest themselves in childhood. The title of the volume is curious. Even though familial abnormalities are not necessarily inherited, inherited abnormalities should be familial and 'Familial and inherited' would have been attractive. The first chapter, by Professor Cedric Carter and entitled 'When is familial genetic?', is a masterly synopsis only 12 pages of the essential features of the genetic basis of human disorders. The book is, however, concerned not so much with the genetics of the abnormalities as with the biochemical disorders underlying them as well as their clinical aspects including treatment. It is thus a valuable contribution to the literature on metabolic disorders.

Chapters on disorders of carbohydrate, electrolyte, nitrogen, vitamin, and lipid absorption each deal very fully with the physiology of the subjects as well as their pathology. The chapter on disorders of mineral metabolism includes accounts of acrodermatitis enteropathica and its relationship to zinc, Wilson's disease, and haemochromatosis as well as other rare inherited disorders in a remarkably effective manner in only 30 pages. Cystic fibrosis, hereditary pancreatitis, and alpha-1-antitrypsin deficiency also receive very adequate attention.

The last chapter on miscellaneous disorders is, however, not up to the standard of the others. It tries to deal with the genetics of a great variety of disorders from cleft palate to duodenal ulcer and coeliac disease, to the polyposis and various types of cancer. It does not succeed, partly because inadequate space is given to each condition to be worthwhile and partly because it is out of date. Apart from reference to papers by the authors of the chapter, there are no references cited later than 1978.

R B MCCONNELL

News

International Gastroenterology Symposium

An international symposium on 'Gastroenterology: new trends in pathophysiology and therapy of the large bowel' will be held in Bologna, Italy, 7-9 April 1983. Details from Fondazione Giovanni Lorenzini, Via Monte Napoleone, 23-20121 Milan, Italy.