

Books

Foregut (Butterworth International Medical Review)

By J H Baron and Frank G Moody. (Pp.324. Illustrated. £13.50.) Butterworth Group: London, Boston, Sydney, Wellington, Durban, Toronto. 1981.

This is a splendid book and there must have been considerable co-ordination in a multi-author text to prevent most of the pitfalls of such books. The topics are well chosen and there is an excellent review of the problems of oesophagitis and oesophageal strictures, with a good analysis of the current state of the art. A brief chapter by de Dombal on the evaluation of foregut symptoms reminds us of the semantic problems about nomenclature resulting in a lack of agreed definitions of foregut symptoms, and also of our incompetence in eliciting symptoms accurately. Using peptic ulcer as a model, he reminds us how limited is our knowledge of symptoms. He then illustrates the use of computer-aided analysis to improve the situation.

The chapter on the regulatory peptides of the foregut from Stephen Bloom and his colleagues is excellent, and, in 30 pages with nearly 200 references, provides the reader with a wealth of information.

I was a little surprised to find 50 pages devoted to Menetrier's disease. Although it is an intriguing condition, only a little over 300 cases have been reported. The chapter on medical therapy for peptic ulcer is comprehensive and logical in its conclusions, whereas the chapter on motility, though erudite and interesting, has fewer clinically applicable conclusions. Cancer of the foregut is well reviewed by Siurala, though not everyone would agree with the conclusions about aetiology.

All in all, I found this a most readable text and I am very grateful for the numerous excellent references. It is a book for every serious student of gastroenterology, including the undergraduate who will find it much easier to grasp the rudiments of some of the topics from this book rather than from standard texts.

C G CLARK

Surgery of the Gall Bladder and Bile Ducts (2nd edn.) Lord Smith of Marlow and Sheila Sherlock. (Pp. 495. Illustrated. £30.) Butterworth: London. 1981.

It is now 17 years since publication of the first edition of *Surgery of the Gall Bladder and Bile Ducts* and this welcome second edition is long overdue.

The book is presented in a clear attractive format and the quality of illustration is high. The list of 20 contributors shows some significant changes, the content of the book has been re-ordered, and four growth areas have been identified for coverage as new chapters. These additions (ultrastructure of the liver and biliary apparatus; percutaneous trans-hepatic cholangiography; chemotherapy for carcinoma of the gall bladder, bile ducts and liver; sclerosing cholangitis) are of particularly high standard and enhance the volume greatly.

The book strikes the correct balance between coverage of applied basic science, radiology, medical management and surgical management of biliary tract disease. The emphasis throughout is on awareness of potential problems in biliary surgery and on the avoidance of catastrophe.

To be critical, I was disappointed by the scant detail afforded to some areas of the chapters on biliary tract injury and carcinoma of the gall bladder and of the common hepatic duct. While the restatement of the mucosal graft technique is clear, I would have appreciated more detailed coverage of its results and some discussion of alternative methods of management of high bile duct strictures. In the chapter on carcinoma of the common hepatic duct, I would have thought that transhepatic cholangiography is mandatory *before* proceeding to operation and that portal venography and hepatic arteriography are essential in patients with lesions considered suitable for excisional surgery. Furthermore, discussion of alternative approaches would have been welcome and I was disappointed to find no consideration of such techniques as liver split or palliative intubation of malignant strictures using the U-tube technique.

These criticisms apart, the book is to be recommended to surgeons in training who wish to acquire knowledge of the field, and established surgeons with an interest in biliary tract disease will find much of value in sections of this work.

D C CARTER

Peptic Ulcer Edited by M I Grossman. (p. 179. Illustrated. No price given.) Year Book Medical Publishers Inc: Chicago. 1981.

'The book is intended for use by those non-specialist physicians who care for the largest share of ulcer patients'. To what extent do the staff of the Center for Ulcer Research and Education (CURE) attain this objective? The answer must be: 'Very well'. The book presents a surprisingly comprehensive, satisfactory, and entirely orthodox account of the epidemiology, pathophysiology, clinical features, and treatment of ulcer disease in 160 pages of text -