

Books

Principles of internal medicine Edited by R G Petersdorf, R D Adams, E Braunwald, K J Isselbacher, J B Martin, and J D Wilson. (Pp. 2212; illustrated; £50.25.) New York: McGraw Hill, 1983. When the 10th edition of a work of this size and scope appears less than 30 years after the first, it is testimony not only to the energy of the editorial team, but also to a readership which no longer depends upon the whims and fancies of reviewers. This book contains not only a complete account of diseases of the organ systems, but also almost all the pathophysiology and normal physiology that the undergraduate and postgraduate will need to know. It is pertinent to ask, in the columns of a subspecialty journal, whether it is useful to the subspecialist in his own field. For the gastroenterologist, the answer must be equivocal. Gastroenterology is divided between a 29 page section on 'Alterations in gastrointestinal function', containing chapters on topics such as 'dysphagia' and 'indigestion' and 168 pages on disorders of the alimentary tract, hepatobiliary system, and pancreas. This arrangement may help the student but is less useful to the practitioner. The detail is patchy; two pages on Z-E syndrome allows a very detailed description of a rare syndrome but four pages on duodenal ulcer does not allow the same depth to be applied to a common disease which has been widely studied. This book is not useful for gastroenterologists because of the chapters which deal with the digestive system; these chapters contain the knowledge which gastroenterologists should already know. On the other hand, it is an invaluable work for those who need to keep up with the broad front of internal medicine and this includes not only the vast majority of UK gastroenterologists who are also general physicians, but every physician in active practice. Senescence and obsolescence afflict most books and all physicians, but not this book.

DAVID WINGATE

Structural carbohydrates in the liver Edited by H Popper, W Reutter, F Gudat, and E Kottgen. (Pp. 701; illustrated; price not stated) Lancaster: MTP Press, 1983.

This volume reports the proceedings of a highly successful symposium held during the Basel Liver Week in October, 1982. It covers the biology of

complex carbohydrates, particularly those which are components of glycoproteins. It is an area of considerable complexity and one which is complicated by the technical difficulties of handling and analysing carbohydrate side chains. This book represents the 'state of the art' in 1982 and has contributions by most of the distinguished workers in the field. It deals with the synthesis and degradation of complex carbohydrates and their compounds, their role in intracellular transport and in determining cell surface characteristics, and discusses changes which have been reported in pathological conditions, particularly those involving the liver.

This symposium was the brain child of Hans Popper, now over 80 years old, who worked in this area as a young man. Those who wish to get the flavour of the book should read both his stimulating and thoughtful introduction, and his remarkable summary of the whole proceedings. His verbal presentation at the end of the meeting included newly prepared slides, of the last few talks, and was a tour de force even by Hans' own standards! The written version deserves to be read by everyone with an interest in the biology of the liver. No GI department should be without a copy of this book.

NEIL MCINTYRE

Extrahepatic biliary atresia Edited by F Daum and S E Fisher. (Pp. 280; illustrated; SFr.122) New York and Basel: Marcel Dekker Inc, 1983.

This is a compilation of papers presented at a meeting held in November 1981 covering all aspects of biliary atresia.

The book is divided into sections starting with aetiology, including morphology, and assessment, then the surgical treatment of extrahepatic biliary atresia is considered which is followed by a special section on liver transplantation. The last clinical section is on nutrition and medical treatment. Then follows a variety of papers on research possibly related to the condition. The chapters are written by workers with considerable experience in this rare disorder.

An important change in the course of this disease has followed the widespread use of porto-enterostomy which frequently results in good bile drainage. Unfortunately, virtually all patients eventually progress to cirrhosis, death usually occurring before puberty. It is likely that in the foreseeable future further management of the condition will involve planned liver transplantation at the most appropriate time. The results of liver grafting have improved in recent years and the outlook for children is better now than long term

steroid treatment can be avoided by the use of Cyclosporin A. The aetiology of primary biliary atresia remains a mystery although a viral infection is the most favoured explanation of the initial defect.

The book is clearly written and well illustrated with authoritative data on the present state of our knowledge of this mysterious and distressing condition. It can be recommended for those interested in liver disease in children.

R Y CALNE

Experimental colon carcinogenesis Edited by H Antrup and G M Williams. (Pp. 309; illustrated; \$97.00) Boca Raton, Florida: CRC Press Inc, 1983. Laqueur (with cycasin) and Druckrey (with synthetic alkylhydrazines) were chiefly instrumental in producing the first reliable method of inducing intestinal tumours in laboratory rodents in the mid-1960s. The field of experimental large bowel carcinogenesis, hitherto largely fallow, was tilled thereafter by increasing numbers of workers eager to exploit the new model. Parallel to this development came data from epidemiologic, biochemical, and kinetic studies on diverse human populations defining specific areas that might usefully be examined in the relatively controlled conditions now available in the laboratory, and it is on this rodent model that most subsequent activity has converged. This book attempts to produce a survey of results to date, with the declared twin aims of providing an introduction to readers unfamiliar with the field and of serving as a source of new information for active researchers. A single chapter on epidemiology sets the scene and is followed by two very comprehensive sections dealing with the methods of producing experimental intestinal cancers and the biochemical, morphologic, and kinetic changes which accompany their induction. The largest section deals with factors which modify normal and neoplastic large bowel epithelium. There is inevitably a little overlap here, but the editors have guided their authors well so that this is minimised. Each chapter is comprehensively and accurately referenced. The book, which is well produced and laid out, succeeds admirably in its stated aims and is recommended to all those with an active research interest in large bowel cancer. Those new to the field would do well, however, to consider the cautionary note of Shamsuddin in chapter 3: 'useful . . . as they are, animal models have their limitations'. The relevance of much of the experimental work to human large bowel cancer remains to be established.

J B BRISTOL

Radiological atlas of gastrointestinal disease By D J Nolan (with contributions by Stuart Field and Anne P Hemmingway). (Pp. 313; illustrated; £39.50) Chichester: John Wiley, 1983.

This recent addition to the *Radiological atlas* series illustrates the entire field of barium examinations from oesophagus to rectum. There is a section on plain film appearance in the acute abdomen by Stuart Field and a final chapter by David Allison and Anne Hemmingway depicts gastrointestinal angiography and interventional procedures. Hepatic, biliary, and pancreatic disorders are treated only incidentally.

The text is concise and authoritative. Each chapter has three to six pages of comment followed by a comprehensive bibliography. The first chapter on radiological investigation, gives an admirable summary of modern techniques. As an atlas the book rates highly with over 500 illustrations that really show what is stated. Almost without exception the reproductions are of high quality and some are superb. The vascular studies in particular are clearly labelled with a key to anatomical recognition.

Essentially practical, this book will aid practising radiologists and gastroenterologists alike whether used for reference, as a source of help in interpreting difficult radiographs or as a basis of study for higher examinations. Double contrast techniques are rightly regarded as the norm for modern practice and the author shows that with skilful application the barium examination holds its own notwithstanding current advances in endoscopic procedure.

It is difficult to find fault with this book. A field that would profit by fuller treatment is the barium examination in the infant.

It has been a pleasure to read this atlas. It has a lot to offer anyone concerned with radiology of the gastrointestinal tract.

M J TURNER

The aging gut: pathophysiology, diagnosis and management Edited by E Clinton Texter Jr. (Pp. 198; illustrated; \$41.50.) New York: Masson, 1983. There is a gratifying increase in recognition of the importance of gastrointestinal diseases in the elderly. Gastroenterologists are now becoming aware of the fact that an increasing proportion of their patients are elderly, indeed in Britain more than 50% of beds in acute (not geriatric) wards are now occupied by individuals aged 65 or over. The publication of this book is therefore most timely. The editor (and major contributor) Professor E C Texter says that he looks upon the book as