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*Gut* publishes original papers and reviews concerned with practice and research in the field of gastroenterology. The field is that of alimentary, hepatic, or pancreatic disease, and papers may cover the medical, surgical, radiological, or historical aspects. They may also deal with the basic sciences concerned with the alimentary tract, including experimental work. A case report will be accepted only if it deals with a clinical problem which has been studied in detail and the resulting data provide material for further research.

**COMMUNICATIONS** Two copies of papers and figures should be addressed to the Editor, *Gut*, BMA House, Tavistock Square, London WC1H 9JR. Papers are accepted only on the written understanding, signed by all authors, that they are not published elsewhere without previous sanction of the Editorial Committee, and that all authors agree to publication in *Gut*. Manuscripts should follow the Vancouver conventions (see *Br Med J* 1979; 1: 532-5. *Gut* 1979; 20: 651-2). They should be in double-spaced typewriting on one side of the paper only. On the paper the name of the author should appear with initials (or distinguishing first name) only, and the name and address of the hospital or laboratory where the work was performed. A short summary should be provided at the beginning of the paper.

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International System of Units and some useful conversion factors, see *The SI for the Health Professions* (WHO, 1977). **NB: Such conversion is the responsibility of the author.**

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**Hepatology: a textbook of liver disease** By D Zakim and T D Boyer. (Pp. 1318; illustrated; £75.) Philadelphia: W B Saunders, 1982.

Hepatology is the fourth textbook available that is devoted to liver disease. It is large, comprehensive, and expensive. An immediate impression is the large space devoted to normal structure and function (30% of the book) reflecting the growing importance of the scientific basis of hepatology. This excellent section ranges from detailed accounts of liver anatomy, through extensive biochemical descriptions of the metabolism of glucose, lipids, proteins, and vitamins to chapters on bilirubin and porphyrins. The following section (200 pages) deals with functional consequences of liver disease and includes chapters on encephalopathy, fulminant hepatic failure, portal hypertension, and renal and haematological complications. These were comprehensive up to date accounts notable for their critical analyses of developing areas. A section on the evaluation of liver function provides detailed accounts of biochemical, radiological, and histological assessment of liver disease and includes a chapter on laparoscopy.

The largest section (600 pages) deals with the agents that cause liver disease. Some of these chapters are outstanding such as those on alcohol, viral hepatitis, chronic hepatitis, and primary biliary cirrhosis. Others, on drug induced liver disease, copper and iron metabolism, and tumours are so good as to deserve mention. A difficult subject like cystic liver disease is handled well in a detailed and critical analysis. Two chapters were disappointing. Liver function in anaesthesia and surgery (written by anaesthetists) is largely dismissive of halothane hepatitis and no clinical or pathological account of this important disease is provided. The chapter on disorders of the biliary tract still advocates the routine removal of silent gall stones and sees no place for medical dissolution. The non-operative treatments for obstructive jaundice and retained gall stones are covered scantily and endoscopic approaches (replacing others in Europe) are ignored or dismissed. In spite of this I found *Hepatology* an excellent textbook, generously interspersed with high quality illustrations including many in colour (mainly of hepatic histology).

This book will undoubtedly become popular with hepatologists and gastroenterologists as witnessed by the number of times it was 'borrowed' from my desk while preparing this review.

JOHN SUMMERFIELD

**Martindale: The Extra Pharmacopoeia** Edited by James Reynolds. (Pp 2056; £57.00.) London: The Pharmaceutical Press. 1982.

All clinicians should know about drugs, but gastroenterologists, who are responsible for the maintenance of the commonest route of drug delivery, need to know more about many more drugs than they ever prescribe. The 28th edition of this book contains, according to the publisher, 25% more information than its predecessor, but is still a single volume. As ever, the monographs are authoritative, concise and impartial; an example of this is the summary of the controversy over cimetidine and its alleged carcinogenicity. There are not many books to which all gastroenterologists need access; not only is this one of them, but it is among the select few where it is the latest edition which is required reading. A personal copy of Martindale is a luxury, but a departmental copy is a necessity. It is expensive, but each page is packed with information; at 2.77 pence per page, it is better value than most medical works.

The first edition of Martindale was published 100 years ago and it was written by Martindale, father and son, until 1933. Martindale's original collaborator was a deputy coroner, who was only too aware of the potentially lethal effects of drugs. It is to the credit of the Pharmaceutical Society, who have produced the work for the last 40 years, that they have continued to chronicle the hazards as well as the benefits of the substances whose sale sustains their membership.

DAVID WINGATE

#### Books received

**World review of nutrition and dietetics.** Nutrition education and modern concepts of food assimilation Edited by G H Bourne. (Pp. 192; illustrated; \$97.75). Basel, Switzerland: S Karger AG. 1982.

**Current nephrology** Vol 5 Edited by Harvey C Conick. (Pp. 412; illustrated; £42.50). Chichester, West Sussex: Wiley. 1982.

**Care of the acutely ill and injured** Edited by David H Wilson and Andrew K Marsden. (Pp. 462; illustrated; £22.00). Chichester, West Sussex: Wiley. 1982.

**Fat free . . . that's me** By Anny Mauder. (Pp. 93; illustrated; £5.95). Slough, Berks: Foulsham. 1982.

**The clinical use of ranitidine** Edited by J J Misiewicz and K G Wormsley. (Pp. 314; illustrated; £5). Oxford: Medicine Publishing Foundation. 1981.