Books

Gastrointestinal surgery Vols 1 and 2 Edited by D Fromm. (Pp. 1006; illustrated; £135.) Edinburgh: Churchill Livingstone, 1985.

Gastrointestinal surgery is being increasingly recognised as a major surgical subspecialty not just 'what is left to the general surgeon when other specialists have taken their part'. Close cooperation with endoscopists, physicians, radiologists and pathologists in well organised gastroenterological units is now essential, as the subject expands.

The arrival of this new book therefore is most timely as it covers all aspects of gastrointestinal surgery in detail and in depth. Much of the information could be gathered from various different sources, but it has now been brought together in these two outstanding volumes, under the editorship of Professor David Fromm. All the contributions come from North American surgeons apart from an outstanding chapter on bile duct strictures by Professor Blumgart. Although individual authors express personal opinions, there is a unity about the book that is enhanced by all the line drawings being in the same style. They are clear and of a good size. Some colour photographs – for example, in the endoscopy section, and radiographs are also used. The illustrations are all there to make a particular point, not just for the sake of showing a good picture.

This book combines a textbook of operative surgery with textbooks on gastrointestinal investigations and surgical complications.

Operative details are given of even the simplest procedure such as appendicectomy. Three chapters on endoscopy, diagnostic and therapeutic, are appropriate for this expanding area of gastroenterology and a final chapter on the gastroenterological complications of renal transplantation reflect the changes in surgical practice. Each chapter is well referenced with key references and, most important of all, the index is reliable and extensive. This is the sort of book that should be in every hospital, operating theatre or departmental library and will be used constantly for reference. The text is well set out and easy to read with many subheadings, and the binding is of top quality to withstand the frequent handling that such a first class production richly deserves.

A G JOHNSON

The pancreas Edited by Luis H Toledo-Pereyra. (Pp. 496; illustrated; £63.60). Chichester: Wiley, 1985.

The last few years has seen a deluge of publications on the subject of disorders of the pancreas. In most instances the texts have been marred by editorial bias or indifference, and have made uneven and contentious attempts to clarify the subject: often with conspicuous lack of success. The editor of this book and his colleagues, mainly from Detroit, Michigan, have produced a book which gives a comprehensive overview of normal pancreatic function and its disorders. The style of the text makes for easy reading. In only one chapter on chronic pancreatitis is a jarring note sounded, when confusion between pseudocysts after acute pancreatitis and the dilated duct cysts of chronic pancreatitis is introduced.

Medical aspects of pancreatic disease are very well covered and have achieved a good view in depth of the subject, without being excessively comprehensive. Surgical matters are also well described with a clear text, and together with drawings and line diagrams clearly illustrate the various steps of operations on the pancreas. The list of references throughout the book is very helpful, but surprisingly few are dated after 1981.

The editor is to be congratulated on producing a multi-author evenly balanced book, which provides in a straightforward fashion currently accepted views on this most difficult subject.

This book is strongly recommended to physicians or surgeons who have embarked on a career in gastroenterology and who wish to complement their knowledge of pancreatic disease. In the past, no single text book has been entirely suitable for this purpose, but I think at last this matter has been resolved.

BRUCE TORRANCE

News

Hepatitis Delta Virus and its Infection

An international symposium will be held in Saint Vincent, Tonno, Italy, from 19–20 June 1986. Further details from Dr Mario Rizzetto, Div of Gastroenterology, Ospedale Maggiore, Corso Bramante 88, 10126 Torino, Italy.

4th European Congress of Interventional Radiology

To be held from 24–27 May 1986 at the Caravel Hotel, Athens, Greece. Further details from the Secretariat, 21 P. Kyriakou Street, Athens 115 21, Greece.