long terms. The method was also reproducible in measuring coeliac axis blood flow. 1 Furthermore, using the method changes in mesenteric blood flow after various physiological stimuli such as feeding, exercise etc were detected. 2 In a later study the in vitro accuracy of the method was assessed. 3 In vitro calibration of the method was carried out using a hydraulic system under conditions simulating mesenteric artery blood flow and allowing simultaneous comparative Doppler ultrasound and electromagnetic measurements flow in a latex tube. Comparative flow measurements were performed for flows of 150 ml/min to 1000 ml/min. The coefficient of correlation was 0.98, the slope of regression was 1.008 with an intercept of 15.9 ml/min. The Doppler method over estimated by an average of 4%.

These results indicate an acceptable accuracy of the method, sustain our previous work and also are in accord with the results of similar reported studies. In an in vitro comparative study, Greene et al 1 calibrated a duplex scanner (ATL mark V) and reported a remarkable correlation (r=0.98) between direct flow measurements and calculated flow from the duplex scanner. Avasthi et al 6 confirmed these results and also reported a good correlation between measurements of canine renal blood flow measured simultaneously by the duplex scanner and an electromagnetic flowmeter. The wide range of our results is fully discussed in the article and the reference of Allen et al was in a general context. For example, we referred to Payen et al 8 who also used the velocity profile measurements. Doppler equations can be expressed in different forms and one feels free to use any form.

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References

Books


This is a gem of a little book, full of surgical wisdom; clearly written by experienced surgeons who have encountered most of the complications that they describe. The approach throughout is practical and commonsense. The sections on ileostomy and colostomy, and intra-abdominal abscesses are particularly useful. It is so good that it certainly ought to continue in several future editions. Therefore I feel justified in offering the authors some advice and what I hope is constructive criticism.

The literary style does not make for easy reading particularly for someone for whom English is not their native tongue. Some of the sentences are dauntingly long and careful critical English editing would improve the next edition.

What is particularly striking in this book is the high quality of the clear line drawings, some of which are almost cartoons; this is an excellent way of communicating ideas visually. It is a pity that the authors did not acknowledge the excellent medical artist. In contrast to the clear line drawings are the poor photographs. There is a singularly poor reproduction of a radiograph in Figure 2.5, purporting to show an incomplete staple ring, whereas all that can be seen against the large black background is part of the lumbar spine and bony pelvis and a huge safety pin. Another bad illustration is a black and white photograph through a colonoscope (Fig. 2.9) to which the legend says 'note the presence of an ulcer around suture material'. One is hard pressed to see the ulcer! If the publishers are going to economise by poor quality paper for radiograph reproduction and will not provide funds for colour photographs of colonoscopic pictures then these attempts at photographic reproduction should have been abandoned. Some more line drawings would have been much clearer.

It is the authors fault that some of the illustrations are ridiculously inappropriate. They cannot justify using nearly two pages to show six poor photographs
of different shapes of ileostomy bags accompanied by the legend – ‘numerous modifications of ileostomy appliance are available, so with care the appropriate appliance for each individual patient can be identified’. The statement and the photographs are unhelpful, they give no indication of what is meant by ‘care’ and there is no indication why any particular type of appliance is suitable for any particular patient. Another ridiculous illustration is a familiar triangular diagram which most of us recognise as having been used to illustrate the concept of the solubility characteristics of bile. The diagram appears twice (Figs 8.6 and 10.16) with the same cryptic legend which does nothing to explain the concept. I suggest that in the next edition they stick to line drawings and make each figure speak for itself.

Because this is a practical book based on their own experience many of the statements are didactic and ex cathedra rather than based on any scientifically proven facts. For example on the penultimate page of the text they are writing about the management of the granulating wound after excision of a fistula in ano and say ‘In practice, packs with eusol and paraffin alternating with proflavine produces satisfactory results.’ It seems as if their old chief taught them to do that 20 years ago and they have no reason to regret it. In the section on surgical therapy for the short bowel syndrome in Crohn’s disease, they describe wholly irrational and frankly dangerous manoeuvres to slow intestinal transit, such as vagotomy and pyloroplasty, interposed reversed loops of intestine and the creation of valves. It is horrifying to think that in some parts of the world someone will read this book and believe that these distinguished experienced authors were advocating anti-peristaltic small bowel loops for the short bowel syndrome in Crohn’s disease. It is true that they vaguely condemn them but this does not undo the harm that has been done by dignifying them by inclusion.

When discussing the management of colovesical fistulas complicating diverticular disease they make the didactic statement – ‘certainly there is no place for one stage resection for chronic fistula’. I would take the opposite didactic view that one stage resection and primary anastomosis is the procedure of choice for a chronic fistula. In this condition the rectum is always normal and once the phlegmenous mass of sigmoid colon has been lifted out of the pelvis it can be resected and a mobilised descending colon brought down and anastomosed to the upper rectum at the level of the sacral promontory without undue difficulty.

Of course, we are all entitled to our opinions and this book is essentially the personal opinions of Smith and Taylor and should be read and treasured as such. It cannot be compared with the carefully reasoned pros and cons of discussion that characterises some of the current textbooks of the surgery of the lower bowel. Nevertheless there is much food for thought and at under £20 it is well worth buying if you have any interest in this field of surgery.

J ALEXANDER-WILLIAMS

News

BSG Research Award 1987
A three page summary of personal research work is invited by The British Society of Gastroenterology for the 1987 Research Medal. A bibliography may also be submitted if desired. The Award consists of a medal and £100 prize. The recipient of the Award will be aged 40 years or less when delivering the lecture during the Autumn Meeting of the Society in September 1987. All (or a substantial part) of the work must have been performed in the UK or Eire. Applications (six copies) should be made to: The Honorary Secretary, BSG, 3, St. Andrew’s Place, London, NW1 4LB, by 1 May 1987.

Bayliss and Starling Meeting
This meeting to be held in Liverpool from 29–30 September 1986, will include a symposium on mechanisms of regulatory peptide biosynthesis. Further details from Professor G J Dockray, Physiological Laboratory, University of Liverpool, Brownlow Hill, PO Box 147, Liverpool L69 3BX.

1987 International Symposium on Viral Hepatitis and Liver Disease
This symposium will be held at The Barbican Centre in London from 26–28 May 1987. Further details from Dr Ralph Kohn, Advisory Services Medical Symposia Ltd, 79 Wimpole Street, London W1M 7DD.

Basel Liver Week
This will be held from 12–21 October 1986. Further details may be obtained from Falk-Foundation eV, Habsburgerstrasse 81, D-7800 Freiburg i Br, West Germany.

Alcohol Related Problems
The Seventh International Conference will be held in Liverpool from 5–10 April 1987. Further details from The Conference Secretary, 1st Floor, The Fruit Exchange, Victoria Street, Liverpool L2 6QU.