

much of the information is not available in routinely published medical journals.

R J EARLAM

**Inflammatory bowel disease** Edited by G Jarnerot. (Pp. 182; illustrated; \$66.) New York: Raven Press, 1987.

Berzelius was a distinguished biochemist in whose honour the Swedish Society of Medicine brought together in 1986 a group of well known investigators all keenly interested in the aetiology of inflammatory bowel disease. This edited volume of the papers presented at that meeting provides an excellent summary of each person's contribution to knowledge as part of a well referenced review. It was appropriate that chemical studies were well represented by studies on mucin glycoproteins, eicosanoids, and the possible role of aluminium as an environmental factor. All disciplines contributed, however, epidemiology, genetics, immunopathology, immunology and microbiology. The possible role of several environmental factors was explored such as smoking, diet and the contraceptive pill. A commentary on classification of these disorders emphasising their common features and summaries of recent and potential advances in treatment completes the text. The book is compact, lucid, and well illustrated.

Dr Jarnerot is to be congratulated on organising such a stimulating meeting and on editing so well a comprehensive readable review. The book can be recommended to all who wish to bring themselves up to date on a rapidly advancing subject.

J E LENNARD-JONES

**Manual of gastroenterology** By B T Cooper, M J Hall, and R E Barry. (Pp. 171; illustrated; £9.95.) Edinburgh: Churchill Livingstone, 1987.

This is another handbook on diagnosis, management and treatment of medical gastroenterology. I would like the next edition to start with a chapter on the supreme importance of listening to the patient, then amplifying the history by selective questions, and how most diagnoses are made by history, some by signs, and only a few by tests. Yes, 'It is vital to find exactly what the patient means by constipation', but why define diarrhoea by 'stool consistency not stool frequency'? Should not doctors be told to ask patients with diarrhoea about alcohol consumption and sexual orientation and practices?

Six chapters on symptoms have a dated air, as if there was no science of decision making. We are told 50 causes of gastrointestinal bleeding, but not their relative frequency, nor which questions and answers are the most selective in favouring or excluding a

specific diagnosis, let alone any algorithms. Ought not a proctoscope be used to look for haemorrhoids?

Part 2 covers seven groups of diseases, with spelling such as bethanicol and stuperose. H<sub>2</sub> blockers are still given many times a day instead of each evening. Yes, in Mallory-Weiss syndrome 'the history may be typical', but what are the key features? Part 3 discusses malnutrition and enteral and parenteral nutritional support.

Doctors use various techniques in learning their craft. Some consult one of the many standard detailed textbooks. Those who prefer brisk handbooks in note form will find this useful if they buy it.

J H BARON

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## Books received

**Gastrointestinal cytoprotection by prostaglandins.** Edited by G Bianchi Porro and E Z Dajani. (Pp. 46; illustrated; \$36.00.) Verona: Cortina International, 1987.

**Topics in peptic ulcer disease.** Edited by G Bianchi Porro and K D Bardhan. (Pp. 188; illustrated; \$54.50.) Verona: Cortina International, 1987.

**Operative ultrasound of the liver and biliary ducts.** By H Bismuth and D Castaing. (Pp. 89; illustrated; DM 68.) Berlin: Springer-Verlag, 1987.

**1987 Year book of endocrinology.** Edited by J D Bagdade. (Pp. 419; illustrated; £38.00.) London: Wolfe Medical Publications, 1987.

**A colour atlas of allergy.** By W F Jackson and R Cerio. (Pp. 126; illustrated; £35.00.) London: Wolfe Medical Publications, 1987.

**Paediatric data interpretation.** By J Walter, S Lenton, and C M Gabriel. (Pp. 189; illustrated; £7.95.) London: Butterworths Scientific Limited, 1987.

**Cryptosporidium sp. and other intestinal coccidia.** By G C Cook. (Pp. 38; illustrated; £7.00.) London: Bureau of Hygiene & Tropical Diseases, 1987.

**Small-bowel transplantation.** Edited by E Deltz, A Thiede, and H Hamelmann. (Pp. 272; illustrated; DM 180.) Berlin: Springer-Verlag, 1987.

**Nutrition and feeding of preterm infants.** Edited by H J Bremer, O G Brooke, M Orzalesi, G Putet, N C R Raiha, J Senterre, J C L Shaw and B A Wharton. (Pp. 238; illustrated; £29.50.) Oxford: Blackwell Scientific Publications, 1987.