

enterology, as well as two European and one International Society devoted entirely to the oesophagus. The substantial involvement by surgeons in these developments is reflected in this large work comprising 105 chapters in almost 1000 pages. *Surgery of the oesophagus* is edited by Professor Glyn Jamieson, an accomplished oesophageal surgeon from Adelaide. He has undertaken the Herculean task of contributing extensively to this large volume and editing contributions from 124 experts from various parts of the world. Although primarily intended for oesophageal surgeons, there is much in the book for all with an interest in the oesophagus, with excellent sections on anatomy and physiology, investigation and pathophysiology of oesophageal disease. Neither is the book written entirely by surgeons; well respected gastroenterologists including Castell and Dent join with pathologists, radiologists and oncologists, emphasising the importance of interdisciplinary collaboration in the investigation and management of oesophageal disease.

The principal aim of the book, however, is an extremely comprehensive coverage of all aspects of oesophageal surgery, with greater emphasis on technical detail than any previous volume, and it achieves these objectives admirably. Inevitably, an undertaking of this size results in some repetition and occasional loss of cohesion. The paucity of detail on ambulatory pH monitoring and virtual absence of objective data in the 17 chapters on the various surgical approaches to resistant gastro-oesophageal reflux and its complications is disappointing and presumably reflects the considerable time in compiling a work of this magnitude, during which many advances in these fields have occurred.

Surgery of the oesophagus is a comprehensive reference work which contains much to interest all who have a significant involvement in the management of patients with oesophageal disease.

A WATSON

Gastric protection. Edited by R Cheli. (Pp. 300; illustrated; £107.50.) New York: Raven Press, 1988. This book contains 22 chapters each averaging 12 pages in length concerned with gastric protection. It is divided into four sections – physiological concepts, aggressive factors, anti-secretory drugs and protective drugs. The bulk of the references run up to and including 1986 and there are a reasonable total quantity. The figures and diagrams are generally clear and relevant.

Although the volume covers a wide range of subjects, it is generally rather short on critical analysis and there tends to be a scientific switchback as apparently conflicting data sets or opinions are

placed opposite each other without attempts to reconcile or resolve. The reader therefore obtains sets of possibilities but is short on syntheses. The clinical reader will also find that much is devoted to experimental studies and clinical relevance is rather limited. The chapter on food allergy is a case in point which in essence lists a variety of mechanisms and medications without clarifying their individual importance or giving clinical guidance in dealing with affected individuals. Similar considerations apply to the chapter on ethanol induced damage with a list of mechanisms but no consideration of the clinical problems arising. Elsewhere one can question individual generalisations thus, is the measurement of the capability of fresh tissue to generate prostaglandins 'convenient and reliable'. Much published evidence suggests otherwise.

This book is a useful reference source and is helpful in summarising sets of concepts. The reader seeking a critical synthesis will, however, need to look elsewhere.

M J S LANGMAN

Year book of digestive diseases, 1988. Edited by N J Greenberger, and F G Moody. (Pp. 475; illustrated; £33.50.) London: Wolfe Medical, 1988.

Previous editions of this book have been favourably reviewed in these columns. It is, therefore, sufficient to point out that these apparently inexhaustible editors have once again maintained their high standards of critical selection and comment and that this work remains, for this reviewer, the best of the annual review publications for gastroenterologists.

DAVID WINGATE

Viral hepatitis and liver disease. By A J Zuckerman. (Pp. 1136; illustrated; price not stated.) New York: Liss, 1988.

This enormous volume of more than 1100 pages represents the proceedings of an International Symposium on Viral Hepatitis and Liver Disease held in London in May 1987. The 368 articles describe the results of the latest research being carried out by various groups throughout the world. There are sections on hepatitis A including some early results with hepatitis A vaccines, enteric and parenteral non-A non-B hepatitis, molecular biological aspects of hepatitis B virus, delta hepatitis and animal hepatitis viruses. There are also sections on immunology of viral hepatitis, hepatocellular carcinoma and the treatment of viral hepatitis including antiviral agents and liver transplantation for fulminant hepatitis while the work concludes with the latest results on hepatitis B vaccines.

This book is of most value to research workers in the field but should also form a useful reference for general readers wishing to familiarise themselves with the latest techniques and results of specific aspects of hepatitis research. It is not aimed at the practising clinician.

G O RECORD

Computed body tomography, with MRI correlation. Edited by Joseph K T Lee, Stuart S Sagel and Robert J Stanley. (Pp. 1168; illustrated; \$175.) New York: Raven Press, 1989.

The second edition of what many regard as the standard reference text on extracranial computed tomography has been updated to give an integrated approach to both CT and MRI as well as covering new uses of CT including interventional. There are 27 new contributors and because of their writing skills and clever editorship the work appears seamless. I was not aware that this was a multi-author work.

Early chapters concisely explain the physics and instrumentation of CT and MRI, standard techniques for both of these examinations being elucidated in a systematic way. Imaging of the major organ systems commences with the neck and proceeds down to the pelvis, finally covering the musculoskeletal system, spine, paediatrics and radiation oncology. In each of these chapters the expert contributors from the Mallinckrodt Institute of Radiology and the University of Alabama at Birmingham detail the applications of CT and MRI to various diseases, stressing the practicality of procedures, their interpretation and the differential diagnoses. Computed tomography and MRI sections usually dovetail neatly together, it being sensible to devote less space and imaging to MRI.

I particularly liked the lucidity of this work, whether in describing normal abdominal and pelvic anatomy, the 'tiger territory' of the neck, or the large and expanded section on the gastro-intestinal tract. Perhaps the strongest section is the thorax and mediastinum, there being much new material on cardiac imaging. The chapter describing the peritoneal cavity and its recesses by Jay Heiken is a model of clarity.

The final chapter treads the murky waters of the economics and politics of CT and MRI and points out the MRI whilst certainly a diagnostic procedure for neuroradiology and some musculoskeletal applications, is still evolving in its application to body imaging. In discussing the dramatic explosion of CT since the 1970's the American authors have given generous praise to its British founder Sir Godfrey Hounsfield ('Mr Hounsfield').

Illustrations are of uniformly high quality and are

profuse. They are strategically placed within the text and where applicable correlate with other imaging techniques and with pathological findings. This excellent book is the Gideon's Bible of the scanner suite. Radiologists involved in imaging should have one available for self reference as well as demonstration to colleagues in gastroenterology and other clinical specialities.

ROBERT DICK

An illustrated guide to gastrointestinal motility. By D Kumar and S Gustavsson. (Pp. 470; illustrated; £65.) Chichester: Wiley, 1988.

As a longstanding enthusiast of the study of gastrointestinal motility I found this a most interesting book with its wide range of subject matter and authors. My problems with the illustrated guide relate to these wide ranges. The pattern of the guide comprises three chapters of basic structure, then 10 chapters of methodology, followed by seven chapters on normal findings, with abnormal findings in the last eight chapters. It is not surprising that much of the material is repeated. It is most difficult to write about one's findings without mentioning the methods used. It is also mandatory to mention ranges of normal when noting abnormal findings. Add to this the inevitable variability of approach when 39 authors are involved and a most uneven standard of presentation results. It is most interesting for someone familiar with the field to have a compendium of the evidence of these experts. I am not sure whether a neophyte would not be better served by a more succinct text and fewer illustrations. The illustrations are in the main clear apart from some of the radiographs and scintographs which can be difficult to follow.

The stated aim of the editors in their preface was to provide 'a practical approach to gastrointestinal motility problems' and 'to define areas where motility studies are of established value and those in which they still only have investigational merit'. It is not clear to me that they have been able to transmit their concepts to their contributors, in particular to indicate in what proportion of cases motility measurements have a decisive influence on therapy.

HERBERT DUTHIE

Alimentary, my dear doctor. Edited by C Hawkins. (Pp. 140; illustrated; £4.95.) Oxford: Radcliffe Medical Press, 1988.

Despite being listed as 'Medical anecdotes and humour', this is not just another Christmas stocking filler. It is an anthology of anecdotes, essays and verses from members of the General Practitioners Writers Association. It can be recommended as good light reading for almost anyone except gastro-