Book reviews. Notes 719

Well illustrated.

Perhaps knowledge. The idea (which chapter with trends, these people in terms of understanding the mechanisms of anisms. This is the main theme of the book. The centrepiece is a big review by P L R Andrews, a physiologist, of the afferent mechanisms of the gut. His emphasis is on how understanding these mechanisms could lead to drugs which can modify their contribution. I read this chapter with great interest but also mounting awe at the complexity of the area and the embryonic state of our knowledge. The idea of a magic bullet seems a little naive. I wish Andrews had commented on the chapter after which summaries of the challenging findings of Whorwell’s group that hypnotherapy relieves irritable bowel syndrome symptoms and reduces rectal sensitivity. There are well written but, to me, unconvincing chapters on immune mechanisms and mastocytosis, and Hunter airs his ideas on altered colonic microflora and food intolerances. All in all, this is an interesting collection of essays and there is much for the aficionado, but I fear the beginner might end up bewildered. Some chapters read like transcribed conference talks (though this is not admitted).

K W HEATON


This book is a pleasure to look through. It contains 636 figures, mostly in colour, of liver biopsy specimens, X-rays, ultrasound scans and computed tomograms, clinical and laparoscopic photographs, as well as simple graphs and temperature charts. All have been well chosen from a wide variety of sources to illustrate almost every type of liver disease, including such topics as transplantation, AIDS and hepatitis C. A few lines of explanatory text accompany each picture. The standard of colour printing is uniformly high. This atlas was first published in 1979, and its success has led to a completely revised and updated second edition, with 150 new illustrations. There are 14 chapters, beginning with the clinical examination of the liver and biliary system and moving on through hepatitis, cirrhosis, cholestasis, and tumours to less common diseases such as vascular and storage diseases, infections and trauma. Anyone who proceeds through the atlas from cover to cover will glean a great deal of knowledge, but its real place is as a companion to the senior author’s best seller, Diseases of the liver and biliary system, now in its 8th edition. I suspect that its illustrations will provide the source for many a collection of hepatology teaching slides across the world’s medical schools, despite the laws on copyright!

P M SMITH


Two trends in modern thinking about irritable bowel syndrome are that it is best defined and classified in terms of its symptoms and that in many people it is the somatic expression of psychological distress. This book buckles both these trends, its emphasis being on somatic mechanisms and explanations. The opening chapter expounds the editor’s conviction (which I share) that disordered sensitivity is more important than disordered motility in most patients. They have a neurotic or inappropriate attitude towards bowel. This is the main theme of the book.

Clifford Hawkins Memorial Fund

Dr Clifford Hawkins (1915–91) made a wide range of contributions to clinical medicine,