

BOOK REVIEWS

Gastrointestinal Endoscopy – Basic Principles and Practice. By J Baillie. (Pp 149; illustrated; £20.00.) Oxford: Butterworth Heinemann, 1992.

This slim book is written primarily for trainees in endoscopy to 'fill some of the gaps found in all training programmes'. In this, it undoubtedly succeeds though whether it will appeal to the wider audience hoped for by the author is in doubt. John Baillie's friendly, avuncular, and informative style is a pleasure to read for the most part, although wordy at times. The general layout is very similar to that of the major competitor in the field, Cotton and Williams. There are sections on endoscopes, endoscopy, sedation, the ASGE training guidelines, and teaching aids as well as chapters on gastroscopy and basic procedures, colonoscopy and, the best of all the procedure related sections, endoscopic retrograde cholangiopancreatography. There are helpful hints in many areas, written with humour and obviously much experience of the problems encountered by trainees. Some of them would be of help also to the more experienced.

Trainees at varying stages of maturity to whom I have shown the book commented that the initial section seems suitable for those who have never seen an endoscope or an endoscopy unit but, thereafter, rapidly becomes redundant. This is perhaps inevitable in a book that intends to be comprehensive for beginners. Similar comments were made about parts of the upper gastrointestinal section. The colonoscopy section describes techniques, such as entering the ileocaecal valve that I cannot make work in practice. The book is illustrated by rather obscure diagrams, which hinder rather than help. Sadly the whole enterprise is weakened by poor photographs, some of which were so dark in my copy as to be almost useless. The quality of the diagrams is also disappointing. Illustrations are an important part of any guide such as this and their poor quality is a serious problem. The major rival in this market – Cotton and Williams – has had the benefit of revision through previous editions and was preferred by all the trainees who had seen both. I am sure that John Baillie's book would improve in subsequent iterations, and I hope that it will sell enough in the face of the competition to justify a second go.

P D FAIRCLOUGH

Handbook of Immunopharmacology of the Gastrointestinal System. Edited by J L Wallace. (Pp 193; illustrated; £40.00.) London: Academic Press, 1993.

This is a timely contribution to a rapidly developing field – indeed, the field in many areas has already left some of the chapters looking rather elderly. The book begins with

detailed reviews of the neuromodulation of gastrointestinal immune and inflammatory responses and the immune modulation of epithelial function and of motor activity. The function of neutrophils and mast cells in an inflammatory response is well covered. Lymphocyte and macrophage functions and their control are not discussed as such but they are covered to a degree by an excellent review on cytokines – it is inevitable that at least three more interleukins have been described since it was written. The reviews of eicosanoids, nitric oxide, and platelet activation factor are good. Perhaps the only slight disappointment was the final chapter on the effects of glucocorticoids on gastrointestinal inflammation as it fails to go beyond rather standard information on the effect of these drugs on the release of mediators and cytokine and on an inflammatory response in general. The fascinating events at molecular level that lead to these effects are not discussed at all.

This book is not for the casual reader. It is a gold mine of information and the detailed referencing will be invaluable to the clinical investigator. Some of the chapters are hard going, largely because of a failure to write elegant English. My other criticism is that virtually every cell, protein, mediator or substance is abbreviated *ab initio*. A list of abbreviations (termed 'a glossary') is given at the back but I looked through the book twice before finding it – at least there was suspense before finding what a FLAP was!* Nevertheless, the book is well produced, well illustrated with line diagrams and experimental data, and provides excellent in depth reviews. My review copy is likely to disappear rapidly into the briefcases of eager research fellows.

D P JEWELL

*5-lipoxygenase activating protein.

Surgery of the Anus, Rectum and Colon. By M R B Keighley and N S Williams. (Pp 2448 and index; illustrated; £280.00.) London: W B Saunders, 1993.

These volumes represent a magnificent achievement and follow in the tradition set by its classic predecessor written by Professor John Goligher. It should not be regarded as the next edition of a previous text, even if it uses the same title, but an excellent new creation by Michael Keighley and Norman Williams.

Coloproctology is now emerging as a specialty, a multidisciplinary specialty, and so the question has to be asked whether one or two authors can hope to cover all the subject matter. While the authors have covered much of the ground themselves they have assembled a small team of appropriate experts to assist them and so recognise the difficulty. On this occasion the experts cover other relevant disciplines such as genitourinary medicine, urology, gynaecology, tropical disorders, and paediatrics. In subsequent editions physicians, radiologists, clinical geneticists, and histopathologists will probably be required as the text will inevitably need to cover the surgically driven specialty as a whole rather than be devoted to surgical aspects only. Such recruitment will strengthen the weaker areas.

These general comments must not detract from the immense worth of these two volumes (they weigh 16 lb!). Not only are they well researched and referenced but they are also pleasingly written with good illustrations and detailed index. Of particular value are the chapters on functional problems and the surgical techniques for inflammatory bowel disease. The postscript on laparoscopic techniques is also excellent with its cautionary critique.

There is no doubt that these volumes will be used by many in this country and overseas and greatly assist in the promotion of coloproctology as a specialty. The authors deserve congratulations and it is to be hoped that they will be rewarded in its sales. They have laid an excellent foundation for the future.

J P S THOMSON

If you wish to order or require further information regarding the titles reviewed here, please write to or telephone the BMJ Bookshop, PO Box 295, London WC1H 9JR. Tel: 071 383 6244. Fax: 071 383 6662. Books are supplied post free in the UK and for BFPO addresses. Overseas customers should add 15% for postage and packing. Payment can be made by cheque in sterling drawn on a UK bank or by credit card (Mastercard, Visa, or American Express), stating card number, expiry date, and full name. (The price and availability are occasionally subject to revision by the Publishers.)

NOTES

European venture

The North of England Gastroenterology Society has created a European Venture Fund through donations from industry to support younger members presenting original work at European meetings. Three travelling Fellowships were awarded in 1993 to Dr Mark Cotterill of Leigh Infirmary, Mr Thomas Wright of the Royal Liverpool Hospital, and Miss Tasmin Greenwell of the Northern General Hospital. Their work was well received and stimulated much discussion. The Society plans to continue to support its younger members in this way.

Corrections

An error occurred in this paper by Dr Bart Maes *et al* (*Gut* 1994; 35: 333–7). The symbols in Figure 2 should have been o = after erythromycin, + = normal, Δ = after propantheline.

An editorial error occurred in this paper by Dr Bjørn Østenstad *et al* (*Gut* 1994; 35: 382–70). The fourteenth line in the abstract should have read peripheral blood lymphocytes (not lamina propria lymphocytes).