doses of other 5-ASA compounds in ulcerative colitis.

The American origins of this book do not stand out and generally it is well written. There are some oddities though. The advice that good results in irritable bowel syndrome are "always in the interest of the patient," or else your program would raise some eyebrows, and even some hackles, among irritable bowel syndrome clientele and I have no idea what 'getting worked up in the outpatient clinic to the hilt' all means - perhaps Jilly Cooper does.

I enjoyed reading this book and while I didn't learn a lot from it I think a trainee might. It is well presented and well indexed and is a welcome addition to the library of some of its rivals. At the end of each chapter there are a few key references usually to review articles as well as reference to a relevant chapter of the parent text book Clinical Gastroenterology. Training in gastroenterology is no longer the longest journey in clinical medicine but if you want a single small companion for the trip you could not do much better than this.

R J DICKINSON


Correctly titled An Atlas of Angiography and Cholangiography this is a book of outstanding illustrations of paediatric liver disease. It represents the cumulative experience of three distinguished French radiologists who have contributed greatly to the development and acceptance of invasive hepatobiliary radiology in childhood. Many of the conditions described are rarities encountered by few, and diagnosed by none in a lifetime of paediatrics. The range of diseases discussed is complete from developmental disorders of the biliary tree to primary liver tumours, portal hypertension, and finally transplantation.

The descriptions of the pathophysiology, aetiology, and natural history of these disorders is brief and basic, thereby of limited value to the expert hepatologist, hepatobiliary surgeon or radiologist working in a unit of equivalent national standing for whom there are established texts with less, although as informative, illustrations. Equally a reader wishing to gain understanding of rational investigation of liver disease in childhood needs an overall view of how these techniques, which are technically demanding, link with other modalities. In practice they have to be judged as an adjunct to the non-invasive methods of ultrasound, computed tomography, and magnetic resonance, which have pathognomonic features in many of these conditions and have been of equal importance in enhancing diagnostic acumen. Included is a chapter on technique. Despite the clear description of the steps, an addendum stating that such methods are not those for the "untrained" might be benevolent. Nevertheless, such criticisms should not detract from the illustrative quality and uniqueness of this atlas. The quality of the cases and their reproduction is superb and a testament to the skill and experience of the authors. For the radiologist, it provides a potential library source for referral to classic appearances of common structural liver disorders. In this role it has no competitors, but perhaps in combination with broader radiological and more in depth clinical aspects it would be a landmark text with multidisciplinary appeal.

J KARANI


This work is from an acknowledged master in the field, and is well timed with a revival of interest in endoscopic ultrasound (EUS). The reasons for this are diverse. On the technical side there has been considerable improvement in instrumentation, the development of linear probes with biopsy and colour Doppler facilities, and also miniporos that may be passed down the biopsy channel. Clinically there has always been an interest in the detection of early cancer, but the possibility of endoscopic therapeutic intervention has added new impetus to the value of endosonographic staging. Endoscopists are aware that endosonography is a powerful tool to supplement routine examination, though for many the cost of the specialised equipment required remains prohibitive for comparatively limited utilisation.

The text is a fairly brief review of TNM staging, its technical, graphic techniques, and interpretation. Each section finishes with a comment, in the form of an overview of the cancer and the relevance of EUS to this, which is quite helpful. The value of the case reports that follow is not obvious. Only one is illustrated, so that there is little to be learnt from this except to appreciate the successful role of EUS in the cases described. There is a comparatively short reference and bibliography section. The rest of the book is composed of 71 figures, illustrating a wide range of cases, many with histological, endoscopic or radiological correlation. The histological illustrations are particularly good. The quality of the endoscopic prints is adequate, though not exceptional.

The impression on reading the text is that the endosonographic staging is simple, more accurate than any other technique, and all that is required is for the surgeon to ‘read’ the EUS. You can forgive an expert for feeling this way about ‘T’ staging (depth of penetration of the tumour). Endosonography is currently the only method sufficiently sensitive to determine early T stages, though the use of endo-ultrasound in magnetic resonance imaging challenges this position. The difficulties of ‘N’ (lymph node) staging are understated. It is possible to quote studies showing quite good results for N staging, given the usual care and calling something that is not clearly positive, but this does not mean that EUS is particularly accurate in assessing nodal involvement. Similar in several of vitro studies have shown, EUS is poor in differentiating normal from involved or reactive nodes. The problem of microcystases is not tackled. The need for other examinacions, such as computed tomography, for ‘M’ staging may have been assumed, but apart for a mention in ‘Virtual endoscopic tomography’ is more accurate than EUS for detecting liver metastases, and on page 11 for transabdominal ultrasound to look at the right lobe of the liver in cases of gastric cancer, the entire problem of how to use other modalities in ‘M’ staging, and integrate the findings into EUS staging is left out. Altogether the totality of EUS seems to be rather taken for granted.

The main competition in this field is Gastroenterologic Endosonography, edited by Rösch and Classen. This gives the novice a more detailed view of the normal anatomy, with useful supplementary diagrams of the gastroduodenal region where the anatomy is particularly difficult, and a broader perspec DV on the problems of EUS staging, its limitations, and the role of other imaging modalities. I would have to recommend this in favour of Gastrointestinal TNM Cancer Staging by Endosonography.

C I BARTRAM


If medical research is the process of chipping away at the barrier between what is known and what is not known, then an advance can be described as a breach in that barrier. Of course, research findings can so often lead to new layers of complexity that, in themselves, produce new barriers - and so the process continues. This can lead to the apparent paradox that the more we learn, the more we understand may diminish. For just on 10 years, Roy Pounder has been putting together teams of experts to offer us reviews of 'recent' - a vague term this - work in our specialty. The articles published in the book will be reviewed as necessarily, as to ensure that contributors of review articles have two particular qualities: they write well and they write systematically. For some years, purists have been heavily criticising review articles for their lack of both balance and scope. The most severe offence seems to be partial citation of the literature, which can lead the author (and the reader) into selective bias towards a particular point of view in a controversial area. The accusation that reviewers become 'spin doctors' - leading opinion rather than just laying out all the pre-vailing factual material to allow the reader to come to their own conclusion. Such criticism seems fine, and even noble, but can we define the qualities of a potential writer of reviews?

The writer must have a near-pathological obsession in collecting all the relevant data - not just their own recall supplemented by searchers, though not a necessity, but by recource to the obscure journals (remember Mendel) as well as trawls to find the unpublished - that some of the papers data that just can't get into print. They will bring new ideas and, not Marvel comics). The various chapters are up to date and tolerably well

Gut: first published as 10.1136/gut.37.6.851 on 1 December 1995. Downloaded from http://gut.bmj.com/ on September 17, 2023 by guest. Protected by copyright.