Books received


Book reviews

Professor Adams has written a book which is compulsive and enjoyable reading but leaves you very well informed about the medical problems of the elderly.

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Gastroenterology I: Foregut

Yet another review book on gastroenterological topics, but this one is good value. ‘Mid-Atlantic’ in origin, the eclectic approach of its editors provides articles on oesophageal stricture, the surgical treatment of gastro-oesophageal reflux and oesophagitis, medical therapy of peptic ulcer disease and foregut motility from the United States, an analysis of foregut symptoms, regulatory peptides of the foregut and Menetrier’s disease from the U.K., and chapters on the management of upper gastrointestinal haemorrhage from West Germany and carcinogenesis of the foregut from Finland.

The initial chapters on oesophageal stricture and surgery for reflux and oesophagitis overlap somewhat and contain a fair amount of operative detail; references to therapeutic endoscopic procedures are limited, but the section on gastro-oesophageal reflux and oesophagitis is excellent with clear illustrations. The reader should then turn to chapter 8, where there is a lucid account of the pathophysiology of gastro-oesophageal reflux as part of a fascinating review of foregut motility by Christensen. In a racyly written contribution de Dombal reviews the diagnostic value of symptoms in foregut disease and shows the data sheets which he uses in Leeds and subsequently analyses by computer. The endocrine group from the Royal Postgraduate Medical School provide an authoritative update on the fast moving field of regulatory foregut peptides and from the same stable there is a very full account of Menetrier’s disease, a superb review of this well-known if rare condition.

Two gastrointestinal ‘chestnuts’ are included: one, on alimentary haemorrhage and the other on the medical therapy of peptic ulcer disease. The former covers the medical and endoscopic ground well, if in rather ‘lecture note’ style, but contains little about surgery. The latter is an exceptionally well written and documented review of the present position in non-surgical treatment for peptic ulcer, and should be required reading for all gastroenterologists. The final contribution, on the aetiological factors in cancer of the oesophagus and stomach is most interesting. The Finnish writers expound the Lauren classification of gastric cancer into intestinal (epidemic) and diffuse (endemic) types and make a good case with a well argued summary.

The general standard of presentation is excellent, and with the