Book Reviews


The British Medical Association has published papers appearing in the British Medical Journal in 1967 in the form of a monograph. The book has the following chapters: Dyspepsia (N. F. Coghll), Dysphagia (C. F. Hawkins), Hiatus hernia (M. Atkinson), Gastritis (B. N. Croft), Gastric ulcer (A. M. Gill), Duodenal ulcer (I. E. Gillespie), Perforated peptic ulcer (J. A. Shepherd), Carcinoma of the stomach (J. L. Dawson), Post-gastrectomy problems (J. A. Williams), Malabsorptive states after gastrointestinal surgery (C. Watsell), Bleeding from the upper gastrointestinal tract (G. N. Chandler), Problems of persistent and occult bleeding from gastrointestinal tract (Sheila T. Callender), Surgical treatment of upper alimentary bleeding (H. L. Duthie), Management of bleeding esophageal varices (R. Williams and J. Dawson), Jaundice (A. Paton), Malignant jaundice (T. Hunt), Drugs and the liver (Sheila Sherlock), Cirrhosis of the liver (A. E. Read), Gallstone disease (A. J. Harding Rains), Pancreatitis (L. Brian Fleming), Cancer of the pancreas (I. A. D. Boucher), Acute infective diarrhea (A. M. Ramsay), Bacillary dysentery (A. B. Christie), Gastrointestinal helminthiasis (H. M. Gilles), Diagnosis of the acute abdomen (H. Ellis), Intestinal obstruction (P. G. Bevan), Crohn’s disease (G. Slaney), Medical management of ulcerative colitis (S. G. Truelove), Surgical treatment of ulcerative colitis (J. C. Gologher), Diverticular disease of the colon (N. S. Painter), Rectal bleeding with special reference to cancer of the large intestine (S. O. Aylett), Carcinoma of the caecum and colon (H. Ellis), Malabsorption (N. H. Dyer), Arterial disease of the gut (J. K. Watt). These 34 chapters were written by leading British specialists in a concise but fully exhaustive form, as is typical of British medical authors. They give an up to date account of the clinical presentations, diagnosis and management of the above-mentioned gastroenterological disorders and diseases.

This very interesting book will not only help the family doctors or those working in hospitals in their clinical practice but also inform gastroenterologists and surgeons about advances in the clinical manifestations and therapy of selected diseases and disorders of the digestive system. K. Herfort, Prague


It is a monograph edited by Alexander Williams and Alan G. Cox in cooperation with 25 British and American authors. Foreword by Francis D. Moore, introduction by Andrew W. Kay. The contents is divided into six chapters.

I. Pathophysiology of vagotomy with effects of vagotomy on the stomach, oesophagus and cardia biliary tract, pancreas, small intestine and the regeneration of the vagus.

II. Results of vagotomy inform about different operation procedures, clinical results, effects of vagotomy on nutrition, digestion on haemapoesis and bone metabolism.

In section III there are described, from the statistical point of view, a number of complications of vagotomy, gastric retention, recurrent ulcer, diarrhea, and the disappointed patient.
In section IV, the authors speak about practical problems, preoperative acid test, problems of total selective vagotomy, drainage procedures (pyloroplasty, gastro-enteroanastomosis, and antrectomy), postoperative gastric drainage tubes and a radiologic chapter with examination of patients after vagotomy.

In section V special indications are described – emergency surgery, bleeding and perforation, gastric ulcer, hiatus hernia.

In chapter 28 R. A. Varma from Madras informs about the peptic ulcer in developing countries.

In section VI, the editors worked out the question of current practice according to questionnaires sent by them. Eighty-nine surgeons answered the questions.

Surgeons West Midland Surgical Society 48
Surgeons British Society of Gastroenterology 22
Surgeons of the United States of America 19

In the last chapter and in the summary, the editors conceded that our present knowledge is rather superficial. The clinical questions in most urgent need of solution are preoperative tests for completeness of gastric vagotomy, selection of truncal vagotomy, operation for gastric ulcer.

They hope, that the most exciting progress in recent years was the rapid expansion in the understanding of gastrin and the possibility of treatment with antigastrin therapy.

It is a very useful and important book for surgeons and gastroenterologists; it informs completely and is objective. Z. Vahala, Prague


The book deals in 6 chapters with the main problems of child allergy as well as of conditions of probable allergic etiology. In the first part different ways of allergologic examination, possibility of determination of allergic terrain (absence of agglutination of latex-histamine and/or latex-serotonin) and evidence of responsible allergens are described.

The greatest chapter is devoted to the respiratory allergy, the most important allergic condition in children. The author emphasizes the fact that the allergic reactions run on all levels of the respiratory tract in children and that of the upper respiratory tract often precedes the beginning of asthma bronchiale. The typical appearance of the nasal mucosa is pointed out as the evidence of an allergic condition. The expiratory dyspnea must be carefully evaluated in infants because only ¼ of these cases are caused by asthma. The prognosis of asthma is not generally bad. More serious development may be expected in children suffering from eczema.

The pulmonary function tests, used by the author, are dealt with in the next chapter. Pharmacologic functional examination (cholinergic sensitivity) is of diagnostic as well as of prognostic value. The result of pulmonary function tests determines the way of treatment and especially of re-education.

A special part deals with allergens of which inhalant allergens and microbes represent the most important ones in children.

In the chapter of the treatment of allergic respiratory syndromes the author points to the various effects of symptomatic drugs in different allergic conditions. Corticoids, the major remedy, should be used only for a short time or intermittently. The possibility of modification of allergic terrain is small. The respiratory re-education represents an important part of treatment. But the main way is the specific desensitization. The technic and
different types of allergens are described at length. The effect of long-term desensitization is excellent; 70-80% of successful results.

Digestive allergy in children is mainly that of cow milk and cereals. The little value of skin tests in diagnosis and significance of serum antibodies, the elimination diet and provocation test are mentioned. Other frequent causes of digestive disorders in children must always be differentiated (coeliac disease, enzymes’ defect).

Skin allergy is gone through in a special part. The description and diagnosis of eczema which represent the first manifestation of the allergic terrain in children are given at large. The author could prove the important role of pneumallergens in eczema and good results with the specific desensitization. The part devoted to some special problems of the ecze- matic infant as infection, vaccination etc. is very useful.

Migraine is the subject of a further chapter, although its allergic etiology is rare. In some cases Pneumallergens were found to be responsible and the specific desensitization was successful.

The last chapter deals with the special problems as the vaccination of allergic children, tonsillectomy and adenotomy and the possibility of prevention of allergic diseases. Psychologic problems arising mainly in asthmatics are of secondary significance. The parents and their attitude to the child play an important part. Psychotherapy never can be the basic treatment. The book is designed for paediatricians, general practitioners and will be of help to medical students too. Practical observations and instruction based on the single, often genuine, experience of the author increases the value of the book. It is written in a pretty style. Many well arranged tables increase its instructivity. The specific problems of child allergy are well demonstrated.

Diagnostic features are emphasized in all referred allergic conditions. The similarity of different syndromes in children is pointed to as well as the value of destination of histaminopexis in the dubious cases.

There are 152 references to works on child allergy mostly from recent years.

Book Reviews
The role of hydrocyanic acid in nutrition (O. L. Oke) is concerned with its sources, toxicity and detoxication from the biological point of view.

Nutritional aspects of gallstone formation (L. Dam) is an extensive survey of the author’s experience with experimental gallstone production especially in hamsters, by various dietary manipulations. Similarities and differences between human and experimental cholelithiasis are considered.

Methane production in ruminants (J. W. Czerkawski) summarizes the methano-genesis from the microbiological, chemical and biological points of view.

All papers are well organized, introduced by a synopsis and furnished plentifully with tables and schemes. Most of them are concluded with summaries. References are extensive. The most important subjects of all the papers are indexed at the end of the book. The contents of this volume cover the field of interest of the workers in theory, organization and practice of hygiene and nutrition. Some papers should be read by clinicians interested in atherosclerosis and gastroenterology. The introductory chapters are of general interest and should be read not only by the physicians but by all those responsible for the future of the human race.

M. Keclík, Prague


The title of the book, written by 41 outstanding German, Swiss and Scandinavian clinicians, complies fully with the authors’ aim: to strengthen the physician’s trust in the validity of the basic methods of investigation, used at the first approach to the patient’s bed. It is a compendium of the medical thinking, supported by a thorough knowledge of pathology, on the way from the simple clinical observation of signs and symptoms to the first diagnostic conclusions. Both medical science and art are involved in those considerations. The choice, use and interpretation of modern clinical methods becomes rational only when following this classical examination. The book is thus addressed first of all to those whose main interest and task is the bedside medicine.

In the 13 chapters of Section One general symptoms are evaluated, which may be found by a simple look at the patients, Section Two being devoted to the symptom of pain (8 chapters) and Section Three presenting in 39 chapters the special symptomatology of internal disease. The symptoms to be found in ears, eyes, on the skin, the genital and upper respiratory pathways are included. Concluding normal values of the most important clinical and functional examinations are given and an extensive index attached.

The way how the editors succeeded in keeping up the general trend of the book ‘to see and to diagnose’ in so many chapters written by different experts, is admirable. All chapters are concise and complete even though their pattern may be influenced by the individual thinking, expression and teaching peculiarities of the respective authors. They are introduced by a short-cut survey of pathophysiology, furnished by many pictures (if necessary, in colours), tables and schemes and concluded with a few carefully selected references. If necessary, the most important methods of laboratory and X-ray examination are recommended for a further evaluation of the respective symptoms.

Preserving its completeness the extent of the book was kept within the practical limits useful for a quick orientation in any topic, this aim being achieved by a careful separation of generally accepted facts and of hypotheses.

During 9 years this excellent work has arrived at its 6th edition. The new issue has been
extensively revised and completed. Many chapters were written by new collaborators. Its technical get-up by the publisher is perfect, too.
The book may not only become a source of most useful information for advanced medical students and young physicians, but any experienced clinician will be satisfied when going through it in solving difficult problems of differential diagnosis.
M. Keclík, Prague


German medical literature has had several outstanding textbooks of gastroscopy. After the basic textbook of Schindler in 1923 the book of Henning followed in 1935 and that of Gutzeit in 1937. The introduction of the fibroscope into endoscopic examination of the stomach eliminates the blind areas of examination with semiflexible gastroscope and permitted the visualisation of these areas in the healthy and diseased stomach. Modern medical literature has up to now lecked a manual of fibroscopic examination. Brühl’s and Krentz’s textbook fullfills this task in the modern world literature because it has been published German, English, Italian and Spanish. Nine chapters of this textbook – History of gastroscopy; various types of gastroscopes; the advantages and disadvantages of the semiflexible gastrosopes and of the fibroscope, the role of gastroscopy in clinical examination; technics of gastroscopy; orientation in the stomach, endoscopic pictures of healthy stomach, endoscopic manifestations of the diseases of the stomach, the gastroscopic pictures of the stomach after surgical treatment – are evidence of the great experiences and educational ability of the authors. Several, mostly colour graphs complement the text and increase the educational and scientific value of this book.

Brühl’s and Krentz’ s Textbook and Atlas of Gastroscopy is a valuable manual for beginners and less experienced examiners, but also clinicians experienced in gastroscopy will read this book with interest. The publishing house Georg Thieme, Stuttgart has produced this book with outstanding care in accord with its longstanding traditions.

K. Herfort, Prague


The main authors with 20 co-workers from both German States have enriched the modern German medical literature with a valuable monograph about the indications, results and consequences of gastrectomy. The monograph has 8 chapters, each having several parts written mostly by different authors.
The first chapter deals with the indications, suitable methods of surgical treatment of different diseases of the stomach and the early complications after surgical treatment. The second chapter deals with the physiology, pathophysiology and morbid anatomy of the stomach after gastrectomy and with the immunopathology of the gastritis. The third chapter discusses the symptoms and signs of the diseases and disorders after gastrectomy and the psychological aspects of the surgical treatment of the stomach and the patients after gastrectomy. The theme of the fourth chapter is the diagnosis – analysis of gastric secretion, biopsy, cytology, endoscopy, X-rays examination and the isotopic methods of examination – and of the fifth chapter the late syndroms after gastrectomy, disorders of nutrition, anemia after...
gastrectomy and total gastrectomy, bones changes and the changes in the metabolism of calcium after gastrectomy and the effect of the gastrectomy on the liver, biliary tract and pancreas.

The sixth chapter discusses the conservative and the surgical treatment of the disorders and diseases after gastrectomy. The monograph is completed by the seventh chapter dealing with the special aspects in children after gastric surgery and the eighth chapter discussing the expertise.

I have enumerated all of the themes of the different chapters to give to the readers an exact picture about the contents of this monograph. The disorders after gastrectomy are often incorrectly evaluated and therefore also incorrectly treated. This book informs general practitioners, physicians, gastroenterologists and surgeons about the causes, manifestations, diagnostic methods and treatment of the disorders and diseases occurring as a consequence of gastrectomy. I am convinced that this book will find great interest among the German reading colleagues.

K. Hefort, Prague


Research and clinical workers have a permanent interest in liver diseases because of their often long duration as well as of their growing number. Dr. Stefenelli tried to fill the gap in the knowledges of microcirculation in the liver by intravital examination of the thin brim of the liver in the rat. Using a special method of direct lighting invented by himself, he studied the liver microscopically in normal conditions on the one hand and in pathological ones on the other hand. He critically evaluates the results of his studies, and considers the possibility of applying his findings also in the pathology of the human liver and of contributing thus towards the explanation, how microcirculation concurs in some diseases of this organ. It can be said that the author succeeded in working out an elementary method, and his investigations will certainly be a starting-point for doing further research work into the blood circulation in the liver on microscopical level.

J. Kotrlík, Prague


This monograph, which deals with the differential diagnosis of laboratory investigation of internal diseases, is divided into 2 parts. Part one deals with the differential diagnosis of clinical symptoms which are given in alphabetical order. With each symptom are given the marked changes occurring in anamnesis, physical examination and available biochemical and hematological tests, X-ray and EKG examination. The results of each separate examination are divided into various synoptical tables.

The second part that follows contains a survey of laboratory results and functional examinations, their principles, normal values and clinical interpretations. The laboratory biochemical examinations are also given in alphabetical order.

As the author remarks in his introduction, the monograph is intended above all for students of medicine and young doctors. It is meant to afford them a survey of, and quick orientation in the diagnostic possibilities of various examinations available and to facilitate the differential diagnostic of the patient examined especially with the aid of biochemical and hematological laboratory analyses.

Book Reviews

127
For more exacting and scientific workers, however, this monograph can only be a rough guide. Many chapters, particularly in the second part are questionable and do not afford information on the highest level such as, for instance, the question of choosing the best convenient laboratory process, the specification of method, the quantity of analyzed material, clinical interpretation and so on. Literary sources are not mentioned in the monograph.

In general it can be said, however, that the monograph shows the author’s wide specialized knowledge and that the book can, as a whole, be of valuable assistance particularly to students and young doctors, in such difficult medical fields as are differential diagnostics of biochemical and hematological laboratory findings. In this respect the monograph is fully satisfactory.

F. Mališ, Prague


Four years have elapsed since the last volume of The progress in liver diseases appeared. Medical knowledge has progressed considerably in many fields, new problems emerged requiring further solutions and many have remained unresolved.

This volume claims to reflect the current trends and, in particular, challenging problems of science in hepatology. The editors arranged the topical subjects into 30 surveys written by 51 outstanding authors concerned with the research in liver diseases in America, Europe, India and Japan.

The first group of articles covers physiologic, metabolic and morphologic liver studies, while the second is devoted more to clinical problems. The comprehensive contents of single chapters are given in clear-cut and concise form, all of them being provided with an extensive thorough bibliography, which makes possible further study to all wanting to know more in the actual field. It is impossible to discuss in detail the tremendous amount of material to be found in this volume, just a few subjects should be picked up at random: schemes of liver metabolism, hepatic regeneration and problems of liver cancer, computer technics, etiology of viral hepatitis and the Australia antigen, therapeutic problems, aflatoxin, liver transplantation etc. The reviewer feels only surprised at having failed to find any discussion concerned with biliary tract disease, as one so frequently neglected subtenant in hepatology.

The editors and contributors succeeded in presenting the progress in liver diseases in a ‘deliberately balanced fashion’ and presented a most valuable contribution to the hepatologic literature. The increasing number of authors of non-American origin in monographs of this kind reflects the sound trend to make all sources of research available to the reader. Technically the book is perfectly well equipped by the publishers.

M. Keclík, Prague


The book ‘Fluid balance in canine surgery’, published in 1967 by this author has been translated recently into French by H. Verine, a surgeon from Lyon.

It deals with all the problems that experimental searchers have to face when working with dogs and will be most useful for those who do not understand English.

M. Demole, Geneva