Book Reviews

E. Gudmand-Höyer: Specific Lactose Malabsorption in Adults. Fadl, Copenhagen 1971. This booklet is the thesis of Gudmand-Höyer, who has published numerous works on lactose malabsorption. The most important part deals with milk intolerance after gastric surgery. The frequency of lactose malabsorption is higher in this group than in the un-operated patients. One reason for this is probably the use of gastroenteroanastomosis for the analysis of lactase: the disaccharidase activity is often diffusely reduced in this area.

Milk intolerance and chronic diarrhea in gastric-operated patients may be caused by lactose malabsorption, but the cause is most frequently not due to the operation per se. It may, however, demask an already existing, asymptomatic lactose malabsorption.

The diagnostic criteria must be modified in patients having had gastric surgery. A higher rise in blood sugar during a lactose tolerance test must be accepted, and the reactions of the patients during lactose tolerance test are of no diagnostic value. Enzymatic determination in a biopsy taken close to a gastroenteroanastomosis had no diagnostic value either.

M. Demole, Geneva


Bile proteins have been known for 30 years, but their detailed identification and particularly their precise estimation has only been made very recently.

Part I is concerned with the quantitative estimation of proteins in bile. In man, the concentration of total proteins in hepatic bile normally averages 1 g/l, with great individual variations. This level is raised in biliary infections and decreased in bile duct obstructions as well as in cirrhosis.

Two main classes of proteins are identified in part II: (1) plasma type proteins were found to comprise all plasma proteins for which specific immunological identification tests were carried out, (2) specific bile proteins, not identifiable in the plasma, were found to comprise at least 6 species of proteins.

The origin of bile proteins is discussed in part III. The proteins of ‘plasma type’ found in hepatic bile might come as well from the hepatic cells which are known to synthesize them. Except IgA, the specific activities are the same in bile and serum, demonstrating that they were entirely derived from the blood. A mechanism based on filtration and molecular sieve effects is suggested by the relationship between the rates of passage and the molecular weights of individual proteins. However, this filtration mechanism is bypassed by a fraction of proteins which is transferred from the plasma to the bile by a process of bulk transport.

An attempt was made in the dog to locate the site of the hypothetical molecular sieve process described above and also to specify the origin of that portion of biliary IgA. The results strongly suggest that IgA derived from local synthesis is added to IgA from the plasma in the interstitial spaces and that both forms of IgA, from there on, are transferred into the lumen of the bile ducts by an active process of transport.

This monography is, therefore, bound to be of great help for all those who wish to enter into the field of bile proteins. M. Demole, Geneva