Book Reviews


The latest volume of this well-known series includes seven reviews on different topics. Although the book is intended primarily for those concerned with nutrition and dietetics, some of the papers are a valuable source of information for clinical gastroenterologists as well.

Based on their own experience in India, Pereira and Begum give a concise summary of protein-calorie malnutrition in children, still a major health problem in undeveloped countries. The clinical features, management and the role of social and environmental factors of kwashiorkor are well covered on 40 pages followed by a long list of references.

The contribution by Martinez-Torres and Layrisse is a valuable summary of their studies on iron absorption in Caracas. Using $^{59}$Fe-labelled iron, they measured the per-centual iron absorption from different foodstuffs of vegetable and animal origin. The significance of iron fortification of the diet is discussed.

An international group of research workers studied the role of nutrition, health and social factors in the bodily and intellectual development of Colombian children. The carefully planned and conducted study has shown that children with food supplementation during 1 year achieved a higher level of intellectual performance than the controls. Their physical growth was also greater. Socioeconomic differences between families of well-nourished and malnourished children were demonstrated, but the effect of malnutrition itself could be isolated from the effects of these factors.

Walker (Dundee, Scotland), in a rather concise review, summarizes knowledge on the nutritional needs of patients after operation and stresses the necessity of team-work in the management of these patients.

Two articles, both from the Research Institute for Nutrition in Bellevue, France, are concerned with problems of food technology. Adrian gives a detailed analysis of the mechanism of the Maillard reaction (browning of a mixed solution of sugar and amino acid subjected to heating). The reaction may cause biochemical and nutritional damage and its end-product can be harmful in experimental animals. On the other hand, it can considerably improve the gastronomic value of some foodstuffs, e.g. cheeses. There is a long list of references, but outstanding work was performed by the author himself. Pascal discusses the physiological and metabolic effects of antioxidant food additives, an important aspect in present-day food technology. Careful toxicologic studies are most important, before the innocuous character of a new antioxidant can be accepted. A surprising finding and a promising field for future research is the observation that antioxidants can exert a beneficial effect on the ageing processes of experimental animals and they are capable for enzyme induction in the liver.

Underwood, in her very comprehensive review, gives a critical evaluation of methods used for determination of vitamin A in blood and tissues. Distribution, mobilization and transport of vitamin A is also discussed, with special emphasis on the role of transport proteins.
There is a detailed subject index, and the reader can find the contents of the preceding 14 volumes of this excellently edited series. Typography corresponds to the well-known standards of Karger.

M. Winter, Szeged
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The 70th anniversary of Hans Popper gave the impetus to a collective monograph in which 47 top hepatologists from various countries have scientifically honoured the pioneer of the modern hepatology. Under the editorial skill of the three leading members of the Liver Club the contents were chosen in order to cover all important aspects of liver physiology and pathology. As an introduction ‘the American and European view’ on the problems of modern hepatology are given by two veterans of hepatology – Cecil Watson and Jacques Caroli. In the section on basic research recent progress in biochemistry and electron microscopy raises most interest. We also find here an original and sophisticated criticism of controlled clinical trials in hepatology which, of course, may be applied to other fields as well.

In the field of diagnostics the interest is focused on enzymology, bilirubin metabolism and biopsy. Most extensive is the clinical part with contributions covering viral hepatitis, hepatitis B antigen, drug-induced hepatitis, various aspects of chronic hepatitis and cirrhosis, alcoholic injuries, etc.

It is apparent that in this review of supreme hepatologic competition every participant tried to contribute something new and attractive. The result is a volume of the highlights of modern liver research presented in a most authoritative way. The excellency of the contents matches with the excellency of the edition.

Z. Mafatka, Prague


This book comprises the experience of seven Japanese investigators who have been involved intimately in the development of fiberendoscopy since 1960. In the first part, containing over 100 pages, the technical problems of gastroscopy are described, including direct biopsy, cytology and endoscopic polypectomy. Mainly endoscopes out of the FGS-Series from Machida were used, which are the results of developmental work of the authors. There is little information for working with orthograde instruments, although they are used more frequently now in clinical routine work. The second very extensive part (130 pages) is concerned with the detailed description of pathological findings in the stomach, based on the personal experiences of the authors with more than 45,000 investigations. The literature is critically included. The photographic material is excellent. Even very rare conditions are well documented. Esophagoscopy and duodenoscopy are only dealt with in an appendix. In summary, this book is excellent in content and presentation.

Goebell, Ulm

Erratum

In the EASL abstract No. 152 by Potter et al. ‘C3 Metabolism in HBsAg-Positive and -Negative Chronic Active Liver Disease (CALD)’, published in Digestion 12: 340 (1975) an error appeared in the last paragraph. The second sentence should read: ‘The surprising finding of decreased C3 catabolism ...’, and not as printed: ‘increased’.