Book Reviews


This monograph of two young but well-known Japanese authors is noteworthy and unusual for several reasons: firstly, spectacular is the large size of the book and the luxurious edition with many excellent X-ray pictures in natural size showing incredible details, with many coloured photographs of endoscopical and histological findings. Thus the book has rather the character of an atlas. Secondly, the greater part of the book is devoted to the description of individual cases, extensively and opulently documented. These cases should support a new classification of gastric lesions which, so far, has not been generalized outside of Japan. The Japanese authors divide gastric lesions into protruded and excavated. Among protruded lesions are such which in classical terminology would be called hyperplasia, infiltration, polyp, tumour; among excavated lesions are erosions, ulcers and other defects. The wit of the new approach is that it evaluates the lesion from the standpoint of early cancer, whereas the differential diagnosis is based on a refined roentgenological and endoscopical examination. In roentgenology the double-contrast method (ascribed to Shirakabe) dominates; in endoscopy, credit is given to the gastrocamera and modern fibroscopes with important participation of guided biopsy. Interesting is the suggestion that the diagnostician of gastric lesions should be roentgenologist as well as endoscopist, in one person. The documented cases are illustrative and convincing, indeed. However, it may be questioned whether new horizons emerging from deeper and finer diagnosis are due only to superior capabilities of Japanese authors. The future will show whether this concept is a beginning of a new era in gastric pathology or rather a reflex of interpretations that are at the limits or even beyond the limits of the possibilities of the methods used. In any case, this book is definitely worth reading.
Z. Maratka, Prague


The fourth volume of this successful series includes 13 contributions by outstanding hepatologists from USA, England, France, Sweden, Germany, Austria and India. The chapters deal with morphological diagnosis with regard to aspiration biopsy (Baggenstoss), alcoholic liver injury (Rubin and Lieber), steatosis (Thaler), viral hepatitis (Sherlock), immunology (Smith et al.), fibrosis (Popper and Kent), portal hypertension (Leevy and Kiernan) and its surgical treatment (Bengmark), management of bleeding (Rueff and Benhamou). There are also excellent treatises on uncommon or exotic conditions like primary biliary cirrhosis (Schaffner), Wilson’s disease (Steinlieb), extrahepatic manifestations of cirrhosis (Martini) and Indian childhood cirrhosis (Nayak and Ramalingaswami). The subject of liver cirrhosis is not fully covered, but the choice of topics and authors incontestably was in the best hands. Despite the extent of contents the book is concise and may be recommended for information on the very last progress in the field.
Z. Maratka, Prague