chirurgien honoraire du CHU de Nice.
Sans leur enseignement ce livre
n’aurait pas existé.
J. Delmont

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Foreword

The Symposium on the sphincter of Oddi held in the Centre de Gastro-Entérologie du CHU de Nice is an important event for medicine in general and gastroenterology in particular, since it brings into the focus the recent accumulation of information concerning this important structure. With the advent of new techniques to study its anatomy and its physiology as well as pathophysiology, there is emerging a picture of a multi-functioned structure. The behavior of the sphincter under a variety of circumstances is the reflection of its various component anatomical parts which has been so nicely delineated in this symposium. The review of its physiological behavior with particular reference to the prevention of reflux up to the two important ducts which lead into it also deserve special commendation.

The high point of the symposium, of course, is the application of this anatomic and physiological knowledge to disease and disorder of the biliary tract and pancreas as it is influenced by the sphincter of Oddi. The discussion of the consequences of inflammation of the structure is most important since it has been clear to many for a long time that inflammatory and fibrotic reactions involving this structure may be responsible for a significant amount of disorder of biliary tract and pancreatic function.

The advent of endoscopic and radiographic techniques which are combined to visualize the ductile systems of the biliary tree and pancreas also permit study of the sphincter and, more, the opportunity to alter its function in the event of abnormal muscle activity. The so-called endoscopic sphincterotomy is potentially an important procedure and early results indicate that there may be finite clinical indications for it. That it will continue to be studied and evaluated in an intelligent, controlled fashion no doubt will, in large measure, be due to the contributions of this symposium and its distinguished contributors.

Foreword XII

Rarely has a subject been so thoroughly presented from basic anatomy to complicated clinical problems and much credit is due to Prof. Delmont, his staff, and to those who contributed to this signal event.

San Francisco, Calif.

Marvin H. Sleisinger
President,
American Gastroenterological Association