

Biochemistry of Smooth Muscle Edited by N. L. Stephens. (Pp. 733; illustrated; £24.50). University Park Press: Baltimore. 1977.

The book is a well-produced volume on the proceedings of a symposium held in August 1975. No discussion comments are included. The size of the book and the number of contributors probably explain the delay in publication. Most of the contributions are in the form of papers, each with an introduction, methods, results (often with many graphs and tables), discussion, summary, and references. There are 37 articles by authors from many countries, particularly Canada and the USA. The subjects are listed under seven main headings dealing with energetics of smooth muscle contraction, carbohydrate metabolism, fat metabolism, cyclic nucleotides, contractile proteins, calcium metabolism and cell membranes, and applied biochemistry.

There are many books on the physiology and pharmacology of smooth muscle, but not on its biochemistry. This work is therefore a valuable contribution to the literature, particularly for those with special interest in the subject. Various types of smooth muscle are discussed, but relatively little of the work refers to the gut. The stated intent in publishing the book has succeeded—namely, 'to enable investigators to review this specialised field and to map out future areas of promising research'. Although the book will be of relatively little interest to most clinical gastroenterologists, it will be most welcome by all using biochemical or biophysical techniques to study smooth muscle.

A. BENNETT

Intestinal Ischaemia By Adrian Marston. (£10.50). Edward Arnold: London.

This is a personal monograph based on Mr Marston's experience of and research into the vascular problems involving the intestine over the last 20 years. It is quite short, very well set out and illustrated, and easy to read and Mr Marston writes in a clear and definite style in excellent English.

The first third of the book is an account of the applied anatomy and physiology of the intestinal circulation, with laboratory studies of the effect of occlusion, both acute and chronic, on the blood supply to the intestine. The rest of the book is an account of the clinical syndromes that are seen and may result from impaired blood flow to the intestine. There are chapters

on both acute and chronic ischaemia of the small bowel and a very good last chapter on ischaemic colitis, with its various forms well discussed and illustrated.

Altogether this is a most erudite and scholarly book excellently written. Both the clinical and basic scientific features are clearly set out and controversial matters, such as the role of vascular deficiency in some patients with abdominal pain, are discussed in a fair and critical manner.

This book will be of particular interest to abdominal surgeons and vascular surgeons, and gastroenterological physicians will derive both interest and pleasure from reading it.

H. E. LOCKHART-MUMMERY

Enterostomal Therapy By Harriett Johnson May. Raven Press Books: 1140 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10036, USA.

This American volume is intended primarily for nurses who have been trained in enterostomal therapy, but it will also be of value to all medical and paramedical staff who are concerned with the care of patients with abdominal stoma. The twenty-four chapters cover every aspect of enterostomal therapy, and it is a book that should be available for reference in departments of gastroenterology.

Paediatric Gastroenterology Clinics in Gastroenterology, vol. 6, no. 2 Guest Editor: Murray Davidson. (Price: £15.00 subscription (three issues) £7.50 single copy.) W. B. Saunders: London.

The fifteen chapters concentrate on recent paediatric aspects of the specific subject about which they write, and provide a most useful practical account of progress on a wide front, with the emphasis strongly on the practical problems of patient care. Once again the publication maintains the consistently high standard of this series.

Shock. Pathology, Metabolism, Shock Cell, Treatment By I. Suteu, T. Băndilă, A. Cafrită, A. Bucur, V. Cădea. (Pp. 447. Illustrated. £18.95). Abacus Press: Tunbridge Wells. 1977.

This well-produced monograph represents the results of a complex 10-year programme of experimental work on the problems of haemorrhagic and traumatic shock. It is based on much original work and the extensive references give wide

cover of work in Great Britain, America, and the continent. It was first published in Romania in 1973. The English edition has now appeared, suitably updated and extensively illustrated. The effect of shock on viscera is recorded in depth.