

Notes and activities

Tripartite Meeting in Gastroenterology

A tripartite meeting on 'Nutritional Aspects of Gastroenterology' has been organised by St. Mark's Hospital, The London Hospital, and St. Bartholomew's Hospital at the City University, St. John Street, London EC1 on 30 June and 1 July 1977.

The sessions will be chaired by Dr A. M. Dawson, Professor C. C. Booth, Dr J. E. Lennard-Jones, and Professor J. F. Soothill. Details may be obtained from Miss E. McIntyre, St. Mark's Hospital, City Road, London EC1. (Tel. 01-253 1050).

Books

Disorders of the Gastrointestinal Tract, Disorders of the Liver, Nutritional Disorders Edited by John M. Dietschy. (Price not stated.) Grune and Stratton: New York, San Francisco, London, 1976. This is Volume I of the *Science and Practice of Clinical Medicine*, with Jay P. New Sanford, MD, as editor-in-chief.

The special contribution of this new major textbook of gastroenterology is that clinical problems are approached from the standpoint of general symptom complexes as well as specific diseases. In each main section of the volume there is an initial review of the normal physiological and biochemical functions of the organ. This is followed by a discussion of the specific diagnostic procedures available for this particular system. The clinical manifestations of disease are approached first from the viewpoint of differential diagnosis of major symptoms. For example, upper gastrointestinal bleeding, obstructive jaundice, or malabsorption states. The final subsection relating to each organ provides detailed descriptions of individual diseases.

A weakness of textbooks in general in the past has been the assumption that patients arrive with the diagnosis, and they omit the really difficult phase of reaching it. The concept is an excellent one, but is it really possible to cover satisfactorily the entire spectrum of gastroenterology, including liver and pancreas, and indeed nutrition as well, in one volume? The problem with all comprehensive textbooks along such lines is the difficulty of conveying to the reader the relative values of investigations or treatment, particularly important in relation to the commoner syndromes. There are omissions and the most startling one, perhaps, is the failure to include more than a passing reference to constipation. With all the work going on in relation to bulking agents and dietary fibre this should have been given priority, particularly when nutrition is included as a main section of the book.

F. AVERY JONES

Gastrointestinal Radiology is a new quarterly journal publishing original articles dealing with clinical radiology of the alimentary tract. It will cover all aspects of gastrointestinal radiology, emphasising diagnostic radiology, including special procedures, ultrasound, nuclear medicine, and other methods. The

editors-in-chief are Morton A. Meyers (The New York Hospital-Cornell University Medical School), and Gary G. Ghahremani (Medical College of Virginia, Richmond). The subscription rate of the new journal, published by Springer, is DM 158 and US \$64.80 plus postage and handling.

Synthetic Antidiarrheal Drugs—Synthesis—Preclinical and Clinical Pharmacology Edited by William Van Bever. (Pp. 362; illustrated; Sw.F. 100). Dekker: New York, 1976. The subject is discussed by scientists who have been directly involved in the development and clinical applications of the drugs considered. Individual chapters examine the pathology of diarrhoea, the chemistry of modern anti-diarrhoeals, and the preclinical studies on these compounds. Antidiarrhoeal therapy in clinical practice and the potential for abuse of modern anti-diarrhoeals are also considered.

Immunology: An Introduction to Molecular and Cellular Principles of the Immune Responses By Herman N. Eisen. (Pp. 624; illustrated. £10-15.) Harper & Row: Hagerstown, Maryland. Self-education in a rapidly growing field of medical science presents continuing difficulties. This book can be seen as an admirable bridge between basic immunology and the present frontiers of knowledge. The book is a reprint of the immunological section of *Microbiology* by Davis, Dulbecco, Eisen, Ginsberg, and Wood.

Authors who wish to have their manuscripts acknowledged are asked to enclose a stamped addressed postcard or an international reply coupon.