

Diseases of the Liver and Biliary System in Children

Edited by Deirdre A Kelly
Blackwell Science 1999
Price £99.50. Pp 375
ISBN 0 632 04802 6

The recent advances in liver medicine and surgery have meant that hepatology is now becoming a specialist area on its own and increasingly distinct from gastroenterology. As in many other branches of medicine, children with liver disease are not merely a smaller version of adults with liver disease. In particular, investigations and management of neonates and young children with liver disease may vary considerably from that of adults. Not only is there is a different spectrum of disease, with metabolic diseases forming a major aspect of the differential diagnosis, but clinical patterns of shared diseases (e.g. autoimmune hepatitis or fulminant hepatic failure) may vary considerably from the patterns expected in adults.

This volume is intended as a companion to the 'adult version' edited by Dame Sheila Sherlock. The book is comprehensive and well referenced. Illustrations are concentrated (perhaps rather than relegated) to an atlas section at the end of the book.

The target audience for this book is listed as general paediatricians, paediatric gastroenterologists and hepatologists. I would anticipate that the paediatricians would find this book of great help in order to know how to manage children with liver disease and when to refer to a specialist. The lessons of management of biliary atresia has emphasized how important early and correct diagnosis and management can be for patient survival. Adult hepatologists will find this volume of interest since in many hospitals 'adult hepatologists' are asked to consult on paediatric liver patients.

Overall, therefore, this is a well timed, well produced and well written text book, albeit not cheap. It will have a useful place in the library and offices of those clinicians who may see paediatric hepatology. My own gripe (and this is a

minor one) is there is little about the epidemiology of paediatric hepatology.

James Neuberger, University Hospital Birmingham NHS Trust

Resurgent/Emergent Infectious Diseases

Edited by Brian Spratt
Royal Society of Medicine Press 1999
Price £34.95. Pp 238
ISBN 1 85315 344 3

The changing nature and epidemiology of infectious disease is one of the most enduring challenges facing medicine. This book, published by the *British Medical Bulletin*, reviews many of the key changes in infectious diseases over the past century, and gives a fascinating collection of new and interesting infections. This constantly changing panorama of disease is a continuing stimulation to all doctors working with infection.

The book includes a series of review articles written by acknowledged international authorities. The first chapters discuss reasons for the emergence and resurgence of infectious diseases and emphasize the subtle interplay between human settlement and behaviour and the risk of infection. Although the last century has seen improvements in hygiene, vaccination and use of antibiotics, these have not led to an elimination of infection, as predicted by some. Instead, these changes have produced a milieu in which new challenges have arisen including antibiotic resistant bacteria, and a resurgence of tuberculosis and malaria.

The ever increasing worldwide human population has also had a massive impact on the global epidemiology of infectious diseases, including outbreaks of plague, cholera and dysentery associated with poor living conditions and overcrowding. Encroachment of humans into previously uninhabited areas have encouraged the transmission of zoonoses such as monkeypox, hantavirus and Lyme disease. In developed countries, advances in animal husbandry and food production have resulted in more efficient farming methods and improved yield, but at a

cost, including outbreaks of food poisoning and new variant Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease (CJD).

Human behaviour has also influenced the epidemiology of infectious diseases from the epidemics of water-borne disease associated with the migration of vast numbers of refugees, to the diseases associated with intravenous drug use, exotic travel and promiscuous sexual behaviour.

These subjects are all reviewed in this book and there are few major omissions. The book paints a global picture of infection and reminds us of the delicate balance and eternal struggle for survival between microbes and man. Although this book is likely to be read by doctors working in the field of infection, it will also be of interest to a much larger readership. Politicians would also do well to learn from some of the recent experiences. Unfortunately, despite the inherent interest of the subject, the presentation is uninspiring.

MJ Wiselka, Leicester Royal Infirmary

Hypertension in Pregnancy

David Churchill, D Gareth Beever
BMJ Publishing Group 1999
Price £19.95. Pp 156
ISBN 0 7279 0920 7

Hypertensive disorders of pregnancy have a prevalence of 6.7% as defined by various criteria. This well written book provides clinicians managing patients with hypertension, at whatever stage of pregnancy, with practical up to date information on the pathogenesis and management of this fascinating condition. The text is easy to read, and definitions and practice points are set in blocks, enabling the reader to focus on important practical issues.

As the authors point out, this book should form the framework for all obstetricians, midwives and GPs managing patients with hypertension during pregnancy. It should also be essential reading for all medical students during their obstetric rotation to alert them to the dangers involved with this potentially life-threatening condition. A must for the bookshelf.

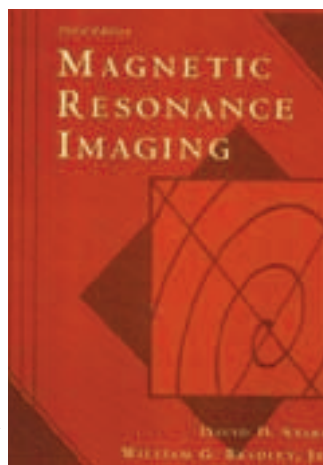
Carl Jensen, Lewisham Hospital, London

Magnetic Resonance Imaging (3rd edn)

David D Stark, William G Bradley
Mosby 1999
Price £235.00. Pp 2000+
ISBN 0 815 18518 9

This text, first published 12 years ago, aims to comprehensively cover the use of magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) in clinical practice and also to present new techniques and innovations. The contributors are mainly North Americans with a few eminent Europeans. Compared with previous editions there has been expansion and updating of the entire contents — there are now over 2000 pages in 3 volumes. Musculoskeletal imaging alone occupies nearly an entire volume and new 'hot topics' such as functional imaging, cardiac and interventional MRI have been added.

The text largely succeeds in its aims and the majority of topics are well presented and illustrated. As with most



multi-author publications there are highlights but some less successful chapters. The former include, among many, succinct and pertinent coverage of MR physics, the imaging of breast prostheses and the MR changes with intracranial haemorrhage. Less adequate is the chapter on bone marrow imaging where there is insufficient discussion of the radiological problems such as atypical but normal marrow and treated marrow with persistent abnormalities. I have recently seen better body images although this may reflect the inevitable delays in producing a book of this magnitude.

My main reservation concerns the place of modality-based texts. Most imaging now occurs in systems. The advantage of system-based texts is they allow a wider discussion of comparative imaging and imaging strategies. With this caveat, however, I consider that the book is an excellent starting point for MRI and makes an excellent radiology bench book or library reference text.

MA Hall-Craggs, The Middlesex Hospital, London