OFFICE GASTROENTEROLOGY

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Preface

Such a vast amount of material relating to research in gastroenterology and nutrition is being produced that even a specialist can find time to read only a small percentage of the published articles. As a result, abstract journals and abstract departments of all kinds of publications are constantly growing. Some abstracts are accurate, many are deceptive. Newspapers and even books, based, at least in part, on these abstracts, abound in references to them. Meanwhile the public is being deluged with pseudo-scientific medical news by science writers in magazines and newspapers and by commentators and advertisers on the radio and television. Doctors often hear of new medical discoveries first from their patients. Many practitioners are depending on the information they obtain from the publications and detail men of pharmaceutical houses. Many of the new pharmaceutical preparations, often not sufficiently tested experimentally to insure their safety, will in themselves cause distressing symptoms, for which further medications are prescribed. The result is that patients today are receiving more different kinds of medication, often purely for the relief of symptoms, than did the patients of the old, ridiculed shot-gun era. Frequently all that these patients require in order to make a prompt recovery is complete withdrawal of all medication.

For many years I was waiting for the publication of a practical monograph which would present simple and specific information regarding gastrointestinal diseases and their treatment. I even had thought of writing such a book. When my friend Dr. Henry L. Bockus told me that he was writing a book, I knew it would be all that I had hoped for and I gave up the idea of writing one myself. The Bockus book proved to be a monumental, encyclopedic, three-volume production, the greatest book on gastroenterology ever written. The advances made in the field of gastroenterology since its publication have given me the feeling that the time has now come when a smaller book, a monograph based on personal experience, would serve a useful purpose. The result is this volume. After forty years of experience in teaching gastroenterology to students, internes and physicians in the Long Island College Hospital (now State University of New York, College of Medicine at New York City) and in

postgraduate courses in various parts of the country, and having written a couple of hundred papers published in a variety of medical journals, I feel that writing of my experiences may prove of value. Except for a few instances in which I have had to rely on the experience of others, what I have written is based on personal experience in the care of patients. Although in the past I theorized regarding the proper treatment for diseases of the gastrointestinal tract, I have never written anything which has not stood the test of time in my own practice. This is true of what appears in this book. I have always tried to present my material, based originally on physiological concepts applied to diagnosis and treatment, in such a way as to encourage the reader to think for himself, to give no treatment without good reason.

I have tried to arrange the material in this book in logical sequence. First, an introductory chapter covers the general concepts of gastrointestinal physiology, pathology and treatments, including a simplified discussion of dietary indications. The reading of this chapter is essential to an understanding of the subsequent parts of the book. There follows a section on diseases which may affect any part of or the whole gastrointestinal tract, including a chapter on intestinal parasites. The next section covers briefly the diseases of each individual part of the gastrointestinal tract, from a chapter on the esophagus to one describing the medical aspects of diseases of the anus and rectum. The next section discusses diseases, originally affecting other parts of the body, which may produce gastrointestinal symptoms or actual lesions. Under each disease physiologic indications for treatment are discussed, and treatment, including diet and medication, is specifically outlined. When the treatment should be similar to one previously prescribed for another disease, this is mentioned and the page on which it is described is given. This arrangement not only saves time in looking up the treatment in the index, but also saves time and space which otherwise would be lost by duplication. The book abounds in these references.

After due consideration and with the approval of the publishers, this book does not give space to a bibliography. We felt that the usual long list of references in books are probably never used by over 90 per cent of readers, especially the busy practitioners for whom this book has been written. I recently studied practically all the current and many of the older books covering phases of gastroenterology, and endeavored to make use of all new material from the literature. I have modified what I read in the light of my own experience. I apologize to the many authors for not mentioning their names.

In order to save space, illustrations have been kept to a minimum. Permission has been obtained and credit given for illustrations from various sources. All but a few of the x-ray pictures used to demonstrate typical lesions were made by my friend Dr. A. L. L. Bell. Nearly all are

based on studies he made in the cases of my patients over the past forty years during which we have worked out such problems together. Dr. Herbert Friedman and Dr. Lewis L. Immerman have permitted me to use some of their films. I am greatly indebted to the outstanding photographic expert, Mr. Stephen Montes, for the fine prints he made for the x-ray illustrations. He has made well over a thousand prints and lantern slides for me in the past.

I feel that I must give credit to my colleagues, both in my own department and in the other departments of the Long Island College Hospital for their cooperation and inspiration over many years. I also express my appreciation to the many practitioners who have given me the opportunity to study and treat their patients.

This is my first book. I never realized how much work is entailed in writing and publishing a medical book. I have been astounded at and deeply appreciative of the tremendous amount of help and encouragement given me by the Saunders organization. I wish to express my appreciation and thanks to Mrs. Natalie J. Hoyt for editing and arranging the material and for preparing the fine index.

If any credit is due for the writing and preparation of this book, it must be given entirely to my secretary, Mrs. Estelle Wulsen, who originally inspired me to write it, with whom I discussed every detail of what to write and who typed and retyped the original manuscript. Her constant encouragement and cheerful cooperation helped to keep me at work when I showed any tendency to lag.

ALBERT F. R. ANDRESEN

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