views. If the book is intended for junior surgeons in training then labelling on the photographs, or line diagrams alongside are essential to help with identification, which after all is the difficult part of any operation. It seems that some of the photographs have been taken with different film or processed in a different way from others. Sometimes the pictures add little, if anything, to the description.

In summary, this is a good description of a common major procedure by an experienced and accomplished gastric surgeon but there are certainly defects in the photographic presentation; this is the responsibility of the author and publishers as well as the photographers. At £14 it is reasonably priced.

C V MANN

Reconstructive surgery of the gastrointestinal tract Edited by Alfred Cuschieri and David B Skinner. (Pp. 289; illustrated; £40.00.) Sevenoaks, Kent: Butterworths, 1985.

A book that will be welcomed by surgeons to provide guidance in some of the more difficult problems of gastrointestinal surgery. The general principles should be mandatory reading for all Fellowship candidates.

Many surgeons will disagree with some of the views expressed and in the treatment of reflux it was disappointing to see no reference (even to dismiss it) to the Angelchick prosthesis. This chapter and the one on oesophageal reconstruction is dominated by the Belsey/Skinner views. The chapter on post gastric surgery syndromes is a little too brief and in some areas would have benefited from the more critical analysis.

There is a section on ileostomy and colostomy and restoration of bowel continuity which is a little disappointing in that it adds nothing new but the sections on colorectal surgery with sphincter preservation, anterior resection and the treatment of prolapse and faecal incontinence are all well worth reading.

There is an excellent review of congenital disorders of the gastrointestinal tract and this is probably the best section I have seen for the Fellowship candidate. The book as a whole should find its place in every general library and no committed gastrointestinal surgeon should be without it.

C G CLARK

Laparoskopie: Atlas and Lehrbuch By H Henning and D Look. (Pp. 278; illustrated; DM 268.) Stuttgart, New York: Georg Thieme Verlag, 1985. It is unusual for a German publication to be less than all-embracing and this book is no exception. The first part, running to about 100 pages, covers

indications, a comparison of laparoscopy with other methods of investigation, contraindications, laparoscopy in special situations for example, when adhesions are present, complications, and even veterinary laparoscopy. Gynaecological laparoscopy is mentioned only briefly. There are also chapters on the requirements of a laparoscopy theatre, much detail on equipment, preparation and aftercare of the patient and of course a detailed description of the procedure, and further shorter sections on such topics as documentation. The second part, of over 150 pages, is a lavishly and beautifully illustrated atlas, each illustration being accompanied by a short description. Throughout the book there are tables and diagrams, mostly presented in attractive pastel shades and loaded with information. The references, which are listed alphabetically and are not numbered, seem to add up to over 1500.

The approach, is, clearly, comprehensive. The overall appearance of the book is excellent, and the layout and printing of a very high standard. The photographs of laparoscopic appearances are outstanding and especially impressive to those of us who are more used to seeing photographs of fibre-endoscopic appearances. The authors and publishers are to be congratulated on producing a book which will for long remain the reference book on this subject.

In 1970–73 over 90 000 laparoscopies were carried out in Germany, while in the rest of Europe only approximately 52 000 were reported. Do we do too few of these investigations? Certainly this book will help us review and possibly revise our ideas. The German edition costs DM 268. An English edition is promised for 1986. It will be very welcome.

K F R SCHILLER

Sterols and bile acids. Edited by H Danielsson and J Sjoval. (Pp. 447; illustrated; US\$70.00; Dfl 189.00.) Amsterdam: Elsevier Science Publishers, 1985.

This is a beautifully produced book forming volume 12 of the *New comprehensive biochemistry series*. Not surprisingly, therefore, the majority of the book is devoted to basic biochemistry and may have limited appeal to practising gastroenterologists. The editors are distinguished scientists well known in the field. There are 14 chapters, the first six being primarily devoted to the biochemistry of cholesterol (biosynthesis, control of uptake, carrier proteins, esters, absorption, and metabolism by intestinal epithelium, and involvement in membrane structure). Chapters 9–14 deal with the biosynthesis and metabolism of bile acids. There is one chapter on plant sterols, one on sterols in invertebrates and a