especially when precise aetiological mechanisms are discussed. This is in no way the author's fault, as the literature clearly abounds in conflicting evidence, no doubt because of the involvement of very many factors and the resulting difficulty in study in truly comparable groups of patients.

The scope of the book is enlarged by considering, in the context of hepatic disease, the mechanism of sodium and water retention in ascites formation, other electrolyte disorders, renal tubular acidosis, and glomerulonephritis; there are also chapters on the treatment of renal failure and ascites.

The section on electrolyte disorders and tubular acidosis are really somewhat superficial. Much the best chapters are those on renal failure in liver disease and on the mechanism and treatment of fluid retention. This is hardly surprising as the author has made significant original contributions to knowledge in these areas.

Dr Wilkinson's book will be of interest to nephrologists and hepatologists, but is not likely to prove attractive to family practitioners or medical students as suggested in the publisher's press release.

R D COHEN

Epidemiology of Cancer of the Digestive Tract
Edited by P Corresa and W. Haerszel. (Pp. 264; illustrated; \$48). The Hague: Martinus Nijhof, 1982. As the title suggests, this book consists of eight reviews by a total of 14 authors of what is known of the epidemiology of the common gastrointestinal cancers including lymphoma. Like most books of this ilk, it is something of a curate's egg. The individual chapters on cancer of the oesophagus, liver, and large bowel are particularly good. No doubt this reflects the relevant authors' eminence in their respective fields as well as the fact that epidemiological studies have made a major contribution to understanding their aetiology. Unfortunately, other chapters are not of the same quality, and, possibly as a result of trying to be too comprehensive in their review of the literature, are difficult to digest.

It is hard to understand why nearly a fifth of the book is devoted to cancers of the gall bladder and biliary passages, especially when so relatively little is known of their epidemiology. In contrast, the chapter on gastric cancer is short, considering its importance. There are also two curious chapters that amount mainly to accounts of the authors' own work which seem out of place, considering one is devoted to a study of 26 cases of colon cancer in young people and the other is a review of gall-

bladder cancer in New Mexico.

It is not possible to unreservedly recommend this book. It is not easy reading. An introductory chapter assessing the various sources of data and the pitfalls in their interpretation would probably have been helpful to the reader unfamiliar with epidemiological terms and methods. Nevertheless, this book does collect together a lot of material and references that might not be available to most clinicians. It may therefore be of value to those gastroenterologists who – for example, when preparing a lecture wish to know something of the epidemiology of a particular cancer.

RICHARD F A LOGAN

News

Immunolabelling for Electron Microscopy

The first module in a new series of specialist short courses entitled 'Current advances in laboratory techniques' will be held at the Royal Postgraduate Medical School from 17–21 October 1983. Further details from Dr J M Polak, Department of Histochemistry, RPMS, Hammersmith Hospital, Du Cane Road, London W12 0HS.

International Meeting on Therapeutic Endoscopy

This meeting will be hosted by the Division of Gastroenterology, Wellesley Hospital, from 13–15 October 1983 at the King Edward Hotel, Toronto. Further information from Dr N E Marcon, 121 Jones Building, Wellesley Hospital, Toronto, Canada M4Y 1J3.

Novel Approaches and Drugs for the Treatment of Obesity

The Satellite Symposium of the Fourth International Congress of Obesity will be held from 3–5 October 1983 at The Sheraton Centre, 7th Avenue at 52nd Street, New York City. Further details from Dr Ann C Sullivan, Director, Department of Pharmacology, Hoffmann-La-Roche Inc, 340 Kingsland Street, Nutley, NJ, 07110, USA.

The British Digestive Foundation

The Foundation is delighted to report a magnificent bequest of £515 000 from the late Mr J H Waring. His express wish was that the money should be used to endow Fellowships in memory of his wife, Mrs Amelie Waring, for research into the prevention, early diagnosis, and treatment of pancreatitis.