the significance if any is not, recommendations of dosage have been eclipsed by the passage of time, and the passage describing central nervous effects seems idiosyncratic to say the least. Elsewhere there are other divergences from accepted UK practice. Few would accept chloramphenicol as a treatment for bacterial overgrowth symptoms, use being admittedly described as controversial (*verb sap*). Hydrocortisone enemas are advocated as treatment for distal colitis but other varieties of enema such as prednisolone are dismissed as not having been used extensively or for long periods. Even hydrocortisone enemas get rather cautious advocacy ('reasonably established').

A good feature of this book is that virtually all topics are covered, but a parallel weakness is that the rare such as gastrinoma may be as extensively covered as the common such as gastric ulcer. Whether indeed one should be proffering detailed advice about how to manage very rare conditions I am unsure; the space might be better allocated to a longer description of the management of functional problems or perhaps to a drug encyclopaedia.

Taken overall this is not essential reading, but it does provide an excellent insight into the patterns of thought and behaviour of those in North America who have a lot to tell us, but could also be told a little.

M J S LANGMAN

Coloproctology By J Nicholls and R Glass. (Pp. 236; illustrated; £15.50). Berlin: Springer-Verlag, 1985.

The aim of the authors in writing this handy textbook is to provide a book of sufficient interest and detail for the clinician who has yet to become a specialist coloproctologist; the emphasis is on how a rectal outpatient clinic should be run and what can be achieved there. Considerable detail is given about clinic organisation and the diagnosis and management of the common anorectal problems. It is not a book that provides much information about the management of patients with major colorectal problems, who are essentially dealt with as in-patients.

There is no doubt that this book fills a gap for those who need to know more about basic diagnosis and management of conditions in this speciality; it is good value for money.

Patients attending a rectal clinic have relatively few symptoms and there is a chapter describing case

presentations. Unfortunately it is suggested here that a differential diagnosis should be considered before a clinical examination is done – surely the latter comes first? The chapters which describe the various diseases are well set out and considerable use is made of flow diagrams to enable the inexperienced clinician to work out differential diagnoses and management.

There are many line drawings to help explain simple anatomical details and how to do minor operations. Most of these are readily understandable but one or two are cluttered with too much detail.

At the end of the book there is a brief appendix on stoma care and a most useful appendix on drugs commonly prescribed for colorectal diseases.

W W SLACK

News

XI International Update on Liver Disease

To be held at the Royal Free Hospital, Pond Street, London NW3 from 10–12 July 1986. Further details from Prof N McIntyre, Dept. of Medicine, Royal Free Hospital, Pond Street, London NW3 2QG.

European Pancreatic Club

The 18th meeting of the Club will be held in Nijmegen, The Netherlands from 18–20 September 1986. Further information from Prof Dr JJHHM de Pont, Dept. of Biochemistry, PO Box 9101, 6500 HB Nijmegen, The Netherlands.

Emergency in Gastroenterology

The 6th symposium will be held in Munich, Germany from 30 April to 2 May 1986. Details from Prof M Classen, II Medizinische Klinik rechts der Isar, Ismaningerstr 22, 8000 München 80, Germany.

IVth International Workshop on Operative Digestive Endoscopy

To be held at Erasme Hospital, ULB, Brussels, Belgium from 15–18 June 1986. Further information from Dr N Bourgeois, Erasme Hospital, 808, route de Lennik, B1070 Brussels, Belgium.