Topics in gastroenterology 12 D P Jewell and P R Gibson (Pp. 317; illustrated; £27.50.) Oxford: Blackwell Scientific Publications, 1985.

This is a further volume in the now familiar written version of the annual Oxford Gastroenterology Course. It must be quite difficult to produce 20 or so separate lectures each year without frequent repetition, but this has been done, as it has in the past, by mixing together a number of different topics, and getting several speakers to talk on aspects of each. These contributions may not always translate well from the spoken to the written version, but 1984 was obviously a good year for the course in this respect, and the relatively speedy publication of this book ensures that the chapters are fairly well up to date.

Five general topics are covered, alcohol, and the digestive system; the pancreas; ulcerative colitis; mucosal defence mechanisms; and irritable bowel syndrome. The authors of all the chapters are well known in their respective fields, and the standard of presentation is uniformly high. Different readers will go first to different sections, depending on their own particular interests, and there is really little to choose between these as there are no really poor contributions anywhere. Perhaps the most interesting new ideas are contained in the chapters on gastric mucosal barrier by Les Turnberg, on gastrointestinal mucus by Professor Allan and his colleagues, and on gastrointestinal gas (Nick Read) and dietary studies in the irritable bowel syndrome (by John Hunter and his colleagues in Cambridge). There is a superb chapter on the pathology of alcoholic liver disease by Professor McGee.

Although the *Topics in Gastroenterology* books are to some extent ephemeral, as subjects are chosen for their topicality as well as for their general interest, there is a great deal in this book to satisfy the general reader, and much which will survive and remain of value for the browsing reader for a number of years to come. At £27.50 for 317 pages on good paper and in hard covers this book is not too expensive, and certainly every hospital's library should have one.

RICHARD F HARVEY

News

Current Advances in Laboratory Techniques

A series of courses on various topics will be held in 1986/87 at the Royal Postgraduate Medical School, a

London. Further information from Professor Julia Polak, Dept. of Histochemistry, Hammersmith Hospital, Ducane Road, London W12 0HS.

International Association for the Study of the Liver and Latin American Association for the Study of the Liver

From 14–17 September, 1986 a joint meeting of the International Association for the Study of the Liver (IASL) and the Latin American Association for the Study of the Liver (SLH) will be held in Caracas, Venezuela. For further information please contact: IASL-SLH International Meeting, Congreca CA, PO Box 17422, Caracas 1015 A, Venezuela.

American Pancreatic Association and the Pancreas Cancer Section of the NCI Organ Systems Program

The joint annual scientific meeting will be held on 6 and 7 November 1986 at the Ambassador West Hotel, Chicago, Illinois, USA. Details from Dr Howard A Reber, American Pancreatic Association, Dept of Surgery, M580, University of Missouri Medical Center, Columbia, MO, 65212, USA.

Annual Scientific Conference in Gastroenterology, Hong Kong Society of Gastroenterology

This conference will be held at the Sheraton Hotel, Hong Kong from 24–28 September 1986. Further information from Dr E K Yeoh, Medical A Unit, Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Hong Kong.

European Society of Parenteral and Enteral Nutrition

The 8th Congress will be held in Paris from 14–17 September 1986. Further details from the Administrative Secretariat, Convergences ESPEN 86, 16 rue Jean-Jacques Rousseau, 75001 Paris, France.

New Surgical Journal

A new journal entitled *Theoretical Surgery* appeared in February this year under the joint managing editorship of Drs W Lorenz and J H Baron. It will publish contributions on all non-operative aspects of the care of the surgical patient including anaesthesia and intensive care. Further details may be obtained from the publisher Springer-Verlag, POB 105280, D-6900, Heidelberg 1, W. Germany.