In conclusion this book might be a suitable introduction to the topic of ERCP but should not be regarded as comprehensive nor in any way helpful to an endoscopist already performing these procedures. It suffers slightly from having been translated and I suspect with the current availability of much more up-to-date works on the same subject that the price of £33 will be a deterrent to individual readers.

D CARR-LOCKE

Biopsy pathology of the liver. By R S Patrick and J O D

McGee. (Pp. 373; illustrated; £49.50.) London: Chapman and Hall, 1988.

This second edition released eight years after its first publication responds to the need to bring the book up-to-date with the many acquisitions which have taken place in hepatology during this period. The basic format of the book remains the same, but increased by 40 pages, partly accounted for by the addition of some 50 new photomicrographs, and several sections have been largely rewritten. A relevant cover illustration and the trimming of the microphotographs to a size allowing the legends to be printed under the figures rather than on the facing or preceding pages are most welcome. Remarkable is the excellent, modern and yet concise account of the hepatotropic viruses including non-A non-B and delta infections. Topics either overlooked in or developed after the first edition, such as liver transplantation, graft *versus* host disease, AIDS, epithelioid haemangioendothelioma have been added, others like nodular regenerative hyperplasia, drug induced injury and chronic hepatitis have been expanded. The one new chapter concerned with nutritional and digestive disorders is of lesser value. Its contents could have been included in other sections; primary sclerosing cholangitis would be better considered in the context of biliary diseases and its dogmatic sub-division in small and large duct disease is likely not to stand the test of time. Not all would agree with the use of the term 'cholangio-hepatitis', the illustration of copper deposition as a pigment, the choice of 'biliary rosettes' to show pseudoacinar formation in chronic active hepatitis. Despite these reservations the second edition is much improved and I predict that this handy, richly illustrated and reasonably priced work will advantageously compete with existing books on the subject. It should prove of value to all hospital pathologists. Clinicians who want to get an insight into liver histopathology, however, might be better supported by a colour atlas.

B C PORTMANN

Comparative physiology of the vertebrate digestive system. By C E Stevens. (Pp. 300; illustrated; £35.) Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988.

This is not a book of obvious appeal to many of our readers, but there are two good reasons for drawing attention to it. First, if you have ever wondered about the morphology of the digestive systems of the creatures with whom we share this planet, you will find the information here. For example, there are illustrations of the relevant innards of the toad, turtle, red-footed tortoise, iguana, goose, platypus, sperm whale and hedgehog and many other species, and you will find diagrams of the distribution of gastric epithelium in 10 species of bat, including the vampire bat (bet you thought that all bats' stomachs look alike . . .). This may not help you in trivial pursuits, but this book could help to settle the occasional and otherwise inconclusive argument in common room or living room.

The second and more important point is made by the author. He points out that 'because of the cost and inherent dangers of conducting studies on human volunteers, much of this information (on digestive physiology) must be obtained from the examination of other animals. The majority has been derived from use of common laboratory animals, principally the dog, rabbit and four or five species of rodent'. He points out that other species have closer similarities to man, but also emphasises that '... the concentration on similarities as a major criterion for the choice of 'animal models' missing the point that much of the understanding of basic mechanisms has come from the study of differences rather similarities . . .'. Yet, if one considers the number of species of fish (21 700), amphibians (4000), reptiles (6250), birds (8600), and mammals (4150) available for study, it is apparent that most species . . . have not been studied at all'.

Pausing only to point out that the hippopotamus has one of the most complex stomachs but the simplest and shortest intestine of all the Artiodactyla, and that there are three compartments to the llama stomach, I would commend this book to any gastroenterologist with a spark of scientific curiosity and to every medical librarian.

DAVID WINGATE

Surgery of the oesophagus. By G G Jamieson. (Pp. 934; illustrated; £135.) Edinburgh: Churchill Livingstone, 1988.

The considerable growth of interest and developments in the fields of investigation, pathophysiology, and management of oesophageal disease have been reflected in recent years in the formation of the oesophageal section of the British Society of Gastro-

enterology, as well as two European and one International Society devoted entirely to the oesophagus. The substantial involvement by surgeons in these developments is reflected in this large work comprising 105 chapters in almost 1000 pages. *Surgery of the oesophagus* is edited by Professor Glyn Jamieson, an accomplished oesophageal surgeon from Adelaide. He has undertaken the Herculean task of contributing extensively to this large volume and editing contributions from 124 experts from various parts of the world. Although primarily intended for oesophageal surgeons, there is much in the book for all with an interest in the oesophagus, with excellent sections on anatomy and physiology, investigation and pathophysiology of oesophageal disease. Neither is the book written entirely by surgeons; well respected gastroenterologists including Castell and Dent join with pathologists, radiologists and oncologists, emphasising the importance of interdisciplinary collaboration in the investigation and management of oesophageal disease.

The principal aim of the book, however, is an extremely comprehensive coverage of all aspects of oesophageal surgery, with greater emphasis on technical detail than any previous volume, and it achieves these objectives admirably. Inevitably, an undertaking of this size results in some repetition and occasional loss of cohesion. The paucity of detail on ambulatory pH monitoring and virtual absence of objective data in the 17 chapters on the various surgical approaches to resistant gastro-oesophageal reflux and its complications is disappointing and presumably reflects the considerable time in compiling a work of this magnitude, during which many advances in these fields have occurred.

Surgery of the oesophagus is a comprehensive reference work which contains much to interest all who have a significant involvement in the management of patients with oesophageal disease.

A WATSON

Gastric protection. Edited by R Cheli. (Pp. 300; illustrated; £107.50.) New York: Raven Press, 1988. This book contains 22 chapters each averaging 12 pages in length concerned with gastric protection. It is divided into four sections – physiological concepts, aggressive factors, anti-secretory drugs and protective drugs. The bulk of the references run up to and including 1986 and there are a reasonable total quantity. The figures and diagrams are generally clear and relevant.

Although the volume covers a wide range of subjects, it is generally rather short on critical analysis and there tends to be a scientific switchback as apparently conflicting data sets or opinions are

placed opposite each other without attempts to reconcile or resolve. The reader therefore obtains sets of possibilities but is short on syntheses. The clinical reader will also find that much is devoted to experimental studies and clinical relevance is rather limited. The chapter on food allergy is a case in point which in essence lists a variety of mechanisms and medications without clarifying their individual importance or giving clinical guidance in dealing with affected individuals. Similar considerations apply to the chapter on ethanol induced damage with a list of mechanisms but no consideration of the clinical problems arising. Elsewhere one can question individual generalisations thus, is the measurement of the capability of fresh tissue to generate prostaglandins 'convenient and reliable'. Much published evidence suggests otherwise.

This book is a useful reference source and is helpful in summarising sets of concepts. The reader seeking a critical synthesis will, however, need to look elsewhere.

M J S LANGMAN

Year book of digestive diseases, 1988. Edited by N J Greenberger, and F G Moody. (Pp. 475; illustrated; £33.50.) London: Wolfe Medical, 1988.

Previous editions of this book have been favourably reviewed in these columns. It is, therefore, sufficient to point out that these apparently inexhaustible editors have once again maintained their high standards of critical selection and comment and that this work remains, for this reviewer, the best of the annual review publications for gastroenterologists.

DAVID WINGATE

Viral hepatitis and liver disease. By A J Zuckerman. (Pp. 1136; illustrated; price not stated.) New York: Liss, 1988.

This enormous volume of more than 1100 pages represents the proceedings of an International Symposium on Viral Hepatitis and Liver Disease held in London in May 1987. The 368 articles describe the results of the latest research being carried out by various groups throughout the world. There are sections on hepatitis A including some early results with hepatitis A vaccines, enteric and parenteral non-A non-B hepatitis, molecular biological aspects of hepatitis B virus, delta hepatitis and animal hepatitis viruses. There are also sections on immunology of viral hepatitis, hepatocellular carcinoma and the treatment of viral hepatitis including antiviral agents and liver transplantation for fulminant hepatitis while the work concludes with the latest results on hepatitis B vaccines.