

Books

Practical Gastroenterology Edited by Ronald L Koretz. (Pp. 395. Illustrated. £22.00). John Wiley: Chichester. 1982.

This book is part of a programme of publications entitled 'Family Practice Today: A Comprehensive Postgraduate Library'. I am unfamiliar with the series but if the other volumes are as enjoyable as the one on practical gastroenterology then the series would repay closer attention.

Practical Gastroenterology has six contributors who have produced a most readable book. The style is relaxed, almost chatty, the points are made clearly, and the emphasis is on down-to-earth everyday gastroenterological practice. The book is divided into two sections, the first dealing with the nine most prominent symptoms of gastrointestinal disease, and the second with a baker's dozen of the more important abdominal diseases. The chapters have been very carefully structured, asking and answering specific points. The reader is taken through a clinical problem by a clinician who is familiar with his field. One would not necessarily agree with all the statements made: I have seldom found the shape of the stool of diagnostic value; and the flow-diagram of the diagnostic approach does not fit exactly with my clinical practice, but all the advice offered is sound and reasonable. This is not a conventional textbook of gastroenterology, rather it is a practical guide to the evaluation of the clinical situation and as such is in competition with at least three other recently published texts. *Practical Gastroenterology* compares most favourably and can be recommended to undergraduates and to graduates who do not have a specialist interest in gastroenterology.

IAN A D BOUCHIER

Large Bowel Cancer Edited by Jerome J. de Cosse (Pp. 225. Illustrated. £9.75). Churchill Livingstone: Edinburgh. 1981.

This first volume of a new long-awaited series, 'Clinical Surgery International', has not been an anticlimax. The series starts with the 'Cinderella' specialty of surgery and is well priced, easy to read and digest, and each chapter is sensibly referenced. It does not attempt to be comprehensive but, instead, highlights areas of contemporary interest. Edited by an American, there are contributions from Australia, from six United Kingdom centres, from six North American 'centres', including Hawaii, and also from Japan. The aetiology of large bowel cancer and familial polyposis are refreshingly discussed by workers of the Japan-Hawaii Cancer Study and the recently established Japanese Polyposis Centre, while the pathology of polyps and the evidence for the adenocarcinoma sequence are authoritatively presented by the pathologists of St Mark's. The methods of early diagnosis and the importance of preventive screening are thoughtfully and honestly evaluated. The current areas of debate in operative technique are focused in chapters on prevention of sepsis, extent of resection, staplers, and the management of obstructing large bowel cancers, which illogically separates a chapter on sphincter-preserving operations from a chapter on local treatment of rectal cancers. Throughout, the volume is appropriately illustrated with particular commendation for the illustrations with the discussion of stapling devices by Rothenberger and Goldberg. Subsequently Goligher sagely reviews the results of surgery and Hughes usefully reviews the management of recurrent large bowel cancer with suitable references for further consultation. In my opinion the added bonus of this volume is the truly comprehensive reviews of adjuvant radiation therapy, chemotherapy, and immunotherapy.

J G PAYNE

News

Steroid Reference Collection

The Steroid Reference Collection, which is maintained by the UK Medical Research Council and the US National Institute of Arthritis and Metabolic Diseases, NIH, provides milligram or microgram samples of reference steroids free of charge for use in clinical or biochemical studies, including the development and stan-

dardisation of microassays, chromatography, and mass spectrometry. The Collection also offers NMR services (^1H and ^{13}C) for the identification of new steroidal compounds, and for structural studies. Requests for information, lists of available steroids, or offers of samples for the Collection, should be addressed to: Professor D N Kirk, Curator of the Steroid Reference Collection, Chemistry Department, Westfield College, Hampstead, London, NW3 7ST.

Correction

The Crick, Harper, Raper Unit for pancreozymin was incorrectly defined in the paper, 'Bioassay of cholecystokinin', by E L Giannoulis and R E Barry, in the February edition of *Gut*, 23, 146-9. The correct definition is: one Crick, Harper, Raper Unit is that amount of activity in 1mg of an arbitrarily chosen standard preparation. (Ref.: Crick J, Harper AA, Raper HS. On the preparation of secretin and pancreozymin, *Journal of Physiology* (1949), 110, 367-76).