included even though the journal is clearly aimed at clinicians.

Two choices then, to help the overworked clinician to keep up. My personal preference is for the American book, which gives the impression of being the distillation of a great deal of hard and critical work; it seems to me that the editors have found precisely the right balance between summarising the work of others, and seasoning it with their own opinions. On the other hand, *Current opinion* covers more ground (or will have done so within the year) for less money, but in less detail so that access to original sources in a library is still required. There is room for both of these in the market, and on the shelves of the moderately affluent.

**DAVID WINGATE**


This volume, the fifth in the series *Contemporary issues in gastroenterology* contains eight chapters. After an introductory chapter on peptides of the gastrointestinal tract by Francesco Carlei, Stephen Bloom, and Julia Polak there are five chapters on individual types of hormone secreting tumour covering Zollinger-Ellison syndrome, glucagonoma, somatostatinoma, VIPoma and miscellaneous tumours. Finally there are chapters on chemotherapy and on the surgical approach to such tumours. There are signs of some laxity in editorial control, with variation in the form and content of the different chapters, and a degree of overlap in some areas, notably the management of Zollinger-Ellison syndrome. This can lead to confusion, as the approach to the patient with Zollinger-Ellison syndrome described in chapter 2 appears to differ from that described in chapter 8. The differences in the text are not helped by what appears to be a faulty flow chart in chapter 2 which suggests that if the primary tumour is not found at laparotomy it should then be excised conservatively. It is hard to judge exactly what has gone wrong, but probably the two main sections of the flow chart have somehow become interposed, with nonsensical results. This may be a printing error, as there are quite a lot of misprints scattered around in the book.

The introductory chapter is as excellent as its authors would lead us to expect, and is beautifully illustrated. One might quarrel with the authors' loyal defence of their continued use of the APUD cell concept and its unfortunate derivative term APUDoma, when many people are moving away from the use of these terms, recognising that although they have had historical usefulness in drawing attention to the similarity of endocrine and other cells, the term is inaccurate and no longer as necessary or helpful as it was a few years ago.

It is a shame about the erroneous summary of suggested treatment for Zollinger-Ellison syndrome, as chapter 2 is otherwise both comprehensive and impressive. Those chapters on glucagonoma, somatostatinoma and VIPoma are all perfectly straightforward and good accounts of their topics. Chapter 6 is probably surplus to requirements in this book, not being concerned with particular tumour syndromes, and really repeating a lot of what is discussed elsewhere on endocrine cells and their tumours in general. It might perhaps have been better to use the space for other topics such as insulinoma or carcinoid tumours, both of which are so much commoner than other types of endocrine cell tumours of the gut. The chemotherapy chapter in fact only deals with insulinoma and carcinoid tumours, so these are covered at least from the point of view of chemotherapy, although other endocrine tumours are not. Similarly the chapter on the surgical approach deals more with insulinomas and carcinoid tumours than with others.

Gastrointestinal endocrinology is a curious subject. It is fascinating and still advancing rapidly, so books such as this are helpful in keeping the clinicians, at whom it is aimed, up to date. The vast majority of clinicians, however, are unlikely to have to deal with more than a handful of patients suffering from conditions described in it during the whole of their working lifetime. Overall this is a well written and well produced volume, but I think it is another one to refer to in the library rather than to buy it for one's own collection.

**RICHARD F HARVEY**


This book comprises individual chapters on the 'major' minerals (calcium, magnesium, iron) and some trace minerals (zinc, copper, selenium, chromium), with a final chapter devoted to manganese and the 'ultratrace' minerals (molybdenum, vanadium, nickel, silicon, arsenic). Each mineral is allocated space on the basis of what is known about it with the exception of zinc, which is covered in excessive detail.

There is no doubt that books like this fulfil a useful role by gathering together information on a circumscribed topic. Some of the chapters are good, notably that on iron. The book is not, however, a