good example of the genre. In part this reflects the often serious lack of knowledge about mineral absorption. More importantly, it is because, in general, authors have not been prepared to review their subject, merely to catalogue progress. It is also because the editors seem to have done little editing. Thus, for example, each chapter includes a sometimes laborious description of the techniques for measuring absorption. As in general, these do not differ between minerals, it might have been more appropriate to include an opening chapter on this topic rather than the one offered by the editors on 'physiological and pathological mechanisms in mineral absorption' which says very little. It is perhaps not surprising that the lengthy chapter on zinc is written by one of the editors. Finally, the publishers are not blameless. From the references it is clear that most chapters were written in 1982. The book was sent to *Gut* for review in January 1985. Why does it take two years to publish a book?

MAYNARD CASE

Integrated clinical science – gastroenterology By P F Jones, P W Brunt, and N A G Mowat. (Pp 365; illustrated; £12.50.) London: Heinemann, 1985.

This has to be the best illustrated short text book of gastroenterology. If you need to make teaching slides, the hundreds of line drawings are absolutely ideal. The book is a very reasonable price for its 365 pages, but with so many illustrations the text is necessarily short. It is written for the 'interested' final year student, or as core reading for the membership or fellowship candidate. I think the book succeeds, and it can be strongly recommended for these 'non-gastroenterologists'.

R E POUNDER

Coloproctology and the pelvic floor Edited by M Henry and M Swash. (Pp 407; illustrated; price not stated.) London: Butterworths, 1985.

Although the title sounds rather like that of a romantic novel and is literally enigmatic, this is a timely book. The important parts of the book are the sections dealing with the methods of assessment of the patients presenting with pelvic floor abnormalities; these sections, written by the two editors, are particularly valuable.

The general standard of printing and reproduction of the illustrations is a weak point of the book. Many of the illustrations have been borrowed from other articles and textbooks written by the chapter authors. Some of these have reproduced well but many of the halftone drawings look indistinct and cheap. The radiograph reproduction and even the black and white histological reproductions of muscle fibres look good but the overall appearance of the

work suffers from the lack of a 'housestyle' of the illustrations. It is difficult to believe that anyone asked to write a chapter on the anatomy of anus sphincters and pelvic floor could do so with the use of only one crude figure and 115 references; 30 figures and 30 references would have been a better proportion. One has the impression that the production of the book was somewhat hurried to meet the deadline of the 150th anniversary celebrations of St Mark's Hospital. With more time and attention to graphic detail this book might well have become a classic. I expect that it will sell well particularly at the meeting.

J ALEXANDER-WILLIAMS

Case presentations in gastrointestinal disease

Edited by W D W Rees, S Hughes, J L Shaffer, and G R Barclay. (Pp 201; illustrated; £6.95.) London: Butterworths, 1985.

The book is in two parts: 60 case presentations with questions and answers, followed by eight short review articles.

The case presentations are a great success. They cover most gastrointestinal problems and are written in an interesting, light style. A few questions are asked the 'examiner' with model answers provided later in the book. It is a pity that these answers are not shuffled, as it is almost impossible not to cheat. Perhaps the reader should start at case 60 and work backwards. The answers allow the authors to discuss the up to date differential diagnosis, management and treatment of each condition.

The eight review articles seem out of place – they only discuss a few aspects of gastroenterology which could have been covered by another 20 case presentations in the same space.

Gastroenterologists will find the book quite unlike outpatients: 59 organic problems and only one patient with an irritable bowel! A pleasure to read, which may help their teaching.

R E POUNDER

Books received

Radiology cumulative index 1978–1982 Edited by William R Eyler. (Pp. 688; not illustrated; no price stated.) Illinois: Radiological Society of North America, 1983.

Vagotomy in modern surgical practice Edited by J H Baron, J Alexander-Williams, M Allgower, C Muller, and J Spencer. (Pp. 378; illustrated; £38.00.) Sevenoaks, Kent: Butterworth Group, 1982.