importance to those who are developing treatment programmes. The volume, though heavily orientated to the American scene, nevertheless, has much of relevance to what is happening in this country or may happen in the future. With the quality of the individual contributions and the very wide scope of the issues covered, it is to be strongly recommended.

ROGER WILLIAMS


This is a book for general surgeons with a colorectal interest. It is particularly suited to the needs of the occasional operator in this specialised field, or for the postgraduate seeking a higher degree in surgery. The authors clearly outline in the preface that this is the audience that they are addressing, and have succeeded in designing a treatise that admirably fulfils this aim. They also claim that some general practitioners might find some sections useful, but this is more doubtful.

The book is produced in bold typescript, with excellent main headings and subtitles. The style is terse, and almost laconic at times. The line drawings are simple and lucid. At all times the statements are clear, and there is little attempt to expand or defend the opinions expressed. In the main, these are conventional and new techniques are usually appraised as 'unproven'. One has a clear impression of careful, conservative craftsmen who would eschew the novel approach until it had been shown to be useful. This is a book that reflects orientation towards a type of practise in which novelty would be risky.

The book has 34 chapters, and covers the entire field of colorectal practise. There are some areas of controversy. The classification of anal fistulae does not recognise the alternative terminology of intersphincteric, transphincteric, suprasphincteric or supra-levator types: this is a serious omission in this area. The haemorrhoid ‘ligator’ is the original Barron instrument which has now been replaced by cheaper and better models. The management of colorectal stricture and other fistulae by conservative methods rather than surgical intervention is hardly alluded to. Adjutant therapy by hyperalimentation, radiotherapy or cytotoxic drugs is only briefly mentioned at various times in the text: stoma care is not given separate consideration; but these are all areas in which guidance is greatly needed by the practitioners at whom the book is directed. Patient assessment and follow up by new radiological and immunological methods is hardly mentioned at all (although the authors may yet be proven correct in not giving them much prominence).

This book can be regarded as successful for achieving its stated purpose. It is easily read, and well produced. It will certainly go through many further editions. Undoubtedly, once the book is established with its chosen audience, these future editions will be more adventurist in their approach.

C V MANN


With the first edition of this book in 1968, Dr Glass set a very high standard when he aimed to summarise the important points in gastroenterological progress. This fourth edition is well up to standard. The art in producing a review book must lie partly in choosing topics which are ripe for review and partly in choosing authors who are both experts in their field and, somewhat more difficult, clear, logical, writers. It is hard to fault this book from either points of view.

The book is divided into four sections and covers aspects of the pathophysiology of gastrointestinal disease; a series of subjects under the heading of 'benign disease'; some aspects of cancer of the GI tract; and a section on endoscopy and imaging. The editors have chosen carefully within these broad fields. Several of the 27 chapters are outstandingly good. In the pathophysiology section, Whittle and Vane on actions and roles of prostanooids in the GI tract, Sarles et al on the pathogenesis of alcoholic pancreatitis and pancreatic lithiasis, and Davidson and Glickman on lipid absorption in man, are notable. In the benign disease section there are excellent short reviews on Barrett's oesophagus (Trier) on intestinal pseudo-obstruction (Anuras and Christensen) and on parenteral nutrition in inflammatory bowel disease (Sales and Rosenberg). Castell and his coauthor and J. Alexander-Williams and his, provide clear competent reviews of oesophageal function abnormalities and post-gastrectomy syndromes respectively.

In the gastrointestinal cancer section, there are good reviews on gastrointestinal carcinogenesis, epithelial dysplasia, and screening for colorectal cancer. Cancer risk in ulcerative colitis, chemoprevention of alimentary tract carcinogenesis, hormone producing GI tumours and nutritional problems in patients with GI cancer, are clear and well worth reading.

Christopher Williams' chapter on the 'logic and logistics of colon polyp follow up' is a very good, thoughtful, review which deserves careful attention and chapters on ERCP in the management of biliary