

pathophysiology of reflux in the medical and surgical chapters might have been avoided by the incorporation of a single chapter on this topic preceding complications and management. The surgical aspects of gastro-oesophageal reflux are perhaps a little unbalanced for the reasons stated.

In general, however, the editors successfully achieve their aim of integrating authoritative multi-disciplinary contributions to produce a well balanced and eminently readable text. The book is liberally indexed and illustrated, and is well produced. It will certainly form a useful work of reference, to which those who become involved in oesophageal work should have access in their libraries, and at its relatively modest price, many of those working regularly in the field would probably prefer to have their own copy.

A WATSON

**The gastroenterology assistant: a laboratory manual.** Edited by Melvin Schapiro and Joel Kuntsby. (Pp. 205; illustrated; \$40.00.) Encino, California: Zephyr Medical, 1989.

This is the third edition of a book which has always received wide acclaim in the USA. There, it is regarded as the yardstick of protocols for gastrointestinal procedures. As such, it is to be found in most endoscopy departments or gastrointestinal laboratories, both as a bench book or reference manual.

The third edition has been extensively revised and enlarged to incorporate details of the most up-to-date therapeutic procedures in endoscopy. Here, endoscopy assistant, medical student, resident and even consultant will find practical guidance of an immensely valuable nature. Although the manual has multiple authorship, the style is generally uniform. The layout is clear and the detail comprehensive. Here one can find all manner of practical help for the efficient undertaking of procedures. Whilst some of the 'tests' described are rather dated, the book is crammed with detail about the up-to-date investigations which comprise everyday work in a busy department.

Despite the fact that the book is in the American idiom, no self-respecting gastrointestinal unit should be without it.

C H J SWAN

**Modern imaging of the liver.** By M A Wilson and F F Ruzicka. (Pp. 695; illustrated; \$180.00.) New York: Marcel Dekker, 1989.

Like Gaul, this book is divided into three parts. Each section has major limitations which might seriously deter a would be buyer.

Part I deals with basic principles. I question if it is

necessary in 1989 to devote 19 pages to the physical aspects of conventional x-ray imaging, including a full page photograph of an x-ray tube. The clinical section fares somewhat better and there are good contributions on angiography, computed tomography and ultrasonography by Crummy, Starck, Freeny, Zwiebel and others. It seems wasteful to fill entire pages with full size computed tomography and ultrasound images some of which are clearly from older generation scanners and have lost definition in the magnification process. The MR section is useful and the text throughout is clear, sensible, and non-controversial, though certainly not 'spumante'.

Sadly the final section on relative efficacy of the various imaging modalities is disappointing. I had hoped for a hard hitting, terse style leading to the best buy, but found the first few pages of each section to be a discussion on epidemiology, pathogenesis, and clinical presentation of conditions. For example, in the section on acute cholecystitis, no optimal technique is summarised and there are many ultrasound images showing gall bladders containing calculi (yet more of these are elsewhere in the book, do editors not edit?). This chapter concludes with four pages of references, and I cannot believe imaging in acute cholecystitis is so very controversial. Readers would be surprised at the conclusion on the chronic cholecystitis chapter to find that one-third of the text is devoted to extolling the virtues of the plain film to determine if calcified gall stones are present, the remaining two-thirds is devoted to the diagnosis of chronic *acalculous* cholecystitis.

This is not a work I would recommend to hepatobiliary colleagues either to take on holiday or to read upon their return.

R DICK

**Biliary lithotripsy.** J T Ferrucci, M Delius, and H J Burhenne. (Pp. 309; illustrated; £61.) Chicago: Year Book Medical Published Inc, 1989.

This publication is adapted from the proceedings of the first international symposium on biliary lithotripsy held in Boston, Massachusetts in July 1988, and is an excellent review of the many non-surgical techniques now being used for the treatment of gall stone disease. For those not directly involved in extracorporeal shock wave lithotripsy, the first five sections representing one third of the book provides an extremely useful technical and clinical background to the subject and although the results are inevitably somewhat out of date the variety of contributions from many centres around the world provide initial results with comments on difficulties and successes. For those centres considering the purchase of a lithotripsy machine, this work will be invaluable.

Suitable consideration and discussion is given to