

gut disorders (peptic ulcer, inflammatory bowel disease, coeliac disease) were given perfunctory treatment. (ii) 'This book was written to help physicians in their care of patients with digestive diseases'. It is certainly too detailed for the student, not practical enough for the resident, too unbalanced for those taking higher medical diplomas and, only in parts, up to the high standards required by trainee and trainer gastroenterologists. Internists will use the even larger and better proportioned rivals for occasional reference.

On balance therefore, I do not feel that I can recommend this book to any particular group of readers. This is a pity because some sections are undoubtedly good and stimulating.

GORDON SLADEN

**Paediatric clinical gastroenterology** 3rd edition By Arnold Silverman and Claude C Roy. (Pp. 971; illustrated; £56.00.) London: Year Book Medical Publishers Ltd, 1983.

The physician who cares for children soon realises that gastrointestinal complaints with or without underlying disease demand a sizeable proportion of his time. In this the third edition of Roy and Silverman's popular textbook, the authors have blended their 15 years' clinical experience with the host of new developments which have occurred in paediatric gastroenterology since their last edition. The aims are unchanged and the subject is presented in a clinically orientated manner. The book is considerably enlarged over previous editions and sections devoted to pathophysiological mechanisms are expanded, a weak point of the first two editions. The text as a whole has been revised, as have the key references at the end of each section, and some chapters – notably those concerned with immunology, diarrhoeal disorders, oesophageal disorders, inflammatory bowel diseases, liver disorders and nutritional care – have been expanded, taking recent developments into account. A wide variety of investigative modalities are now applied with much greater confidence to the child. The last chapter devoted to procedures should have been particularly valuable. It has, however, a number of shortcomings, especially related to the use of fiberoptic endoscopy. In a similar vein, psychosocial aspects of many chronic disorders and non-organic failure to thrive are poorly considered.

Arnold Silverman and Claude Roy have once again produced a textbook which will prove invaluable to those in training and a source of ready reference for all physicians who care for children with gastrointestinal disorders, particularly the non-specialist.

P J MILLA

**Rectal and anal cancers** By J Papillon. (Pp. 198; illustrated; US \$39.20.) Berlin-Heidelberg-New York: Springer-Verlag, 1982.

This book is a highly specialised appraisal of the place of radiotherapy in the management of some rectal and many anal epidermoid cancers. Although the title describes irradiation as an 'alternative to radical surgery', the real contribution of the book is to show how in particular cases radical surgery is the only justifiable treatment, but that just as definitely in other circumstances irradiation is the best choice of treatment.

The book is divided into two sections, the first dealing with adenocarcinoma of the rectum and the second with epidermoid carcinoma of the anus. Each section is of almost equal length (100 pages) and both begin with excellent introductory chapters describing the epidemiologic background and pathological behaviour of the tumours. The historical data compressed into these introductions are handled fairly, sympathetically and comprehensively, and sets the stage beautifully for the subsequent highly technical chapters on treatment. This book is worth buying for these introductory chapters alone, with their enormous scholarship.

The treatment protocols developed by the Centre Leon Bérard, Lyons, are fully described and the results given in great detail. Most of this work has been carried out under the personal supervision of Professor Jean Papillon, and the results are outstandingly good. The case for radiotherapeutic treatment alone for early stage squamous carcinoma of the anal canal is established beyond reasonable doubt.

For adenocarcinoma of the rectum the technique of intracavity irradiation of small, distal well differentiated lesions is shown to be effective in Professor Papillon's hands, with very careful selection by experts who cooperate closely with one another. Whether the technique is superior to local surgical removal is not answered convincingly – and the technique is clearly not going to be available except in a few centres with a very large patient pool to draw upon. Possibly as little as five per cent of all rectal cancers may be suitable for this form of therapy.

The book is beautifully produced and highly readable. No institution which is interested in rectal cancer should be without it, and every country needs one centre which can offer the sort of radiotherapy service that Professor Papillon has established in Lyons.

C V MANN