clinical chapters is problem-orientated and starts from discussion of specific clinical cases. The problems are then considered with the aid of an impressively wide range of references. All the classical concerns of rhinology, such as acute and chronic sinusitis, epistaxis and vasomotor rhinitis, are well dealt with, although the chapter on carcinoma of the paranasal sinuses, especially its treatment, seems short on detail.

The immunological basis underlying many nasal diseases is very well presented and these sections have been specially written by Dr Deborah Danoff, Associate Director of the Division of Clinical Immunology at Montreal General Hospital, and are one of the most valuable features of the book.

The chapters on disorders of the sense of smell, facial pain and snoring cover topics which have recently become much more prominent in rhinological practice and are good summaries of present knowledge.

This is a useful book which contains much new information as well as being a convenient summary of current knowledge on a very wide range of topics.

I would recommend this book as the most satisfactory basic rhinological textbook currently available.

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Gastrointestinal Disorders, Derek A. Coffman, John Chalmers and Gray Smith-Laing. Library of General Practice. Vol. 13. Pp. xiii + 207, illustrated. Churchill Livingstone, Edinburgh, London, Melbourne, New York, 1986. £17.50.

Gastrointestinal disease is important and common, much of it is treatable in primary care, and many symptoms of it are potentially serious. As a subject it therefore offers both an intellectual and an organisational challenge, and this book is to be welcomed as volume 13 of the publishers' Library of General Practice. The text consists of 10 chapters, each devoted to a common presentation of gastrointestinal disease: nausea and vomiting, weight loss and anorexia, difficulty in swallowing, G-I tract haemorrhage, abdominal pain, jaundice, altered bowel habit, ano-rectal pain and pruritus ani. The way that these symptoms is discussed is sensibly and logically laid out, the standard of writing is on the whole high and the book is pleasant to read, with excellent diagrams and many useful tables. It is a pleasure to have been persuaded, as the series editor, John Fry remarks, by logical arguments and nuggets of hard-acquired wisdom to change one's clinical policies. But if Coffman can be likened to a literate senior partner, I must warn him that his juniors will also argue with him. They will challenge his use of unpublished statistics of general practice consultation rates, instead of the comparable figures from the National Morbidity Surveys; if the reason for his use of his own local research group's rates was because the 3rd National Survey was unpublished and the 2nd out of date, we should be told. Similarly, we will question the many statements which appear dogmatic in short textbooks – for instance we are told that H₂ antagonists should 'never' be prescribed before full

investigation, but I doubt whether every GP in the land – including Dr Coffman – could with hand on heart say they had never done so. The advice on whether in dyspepsia to go first for endoscopy or barium studies fails to come off the fence, nor did I find the discussion on reflux adequate (a marvellously helpful Personal Paper on the subject in the *Lancet*, 1982, i, 158–159, could have earned a place in the rather patchy references). I reacted against terms like 'strong psychiatric overlay' (p136) and '[elderly] patients are often poor historians' (p107). No mention is made of any of the questionnaires for detecting alcohol problems, and it is mere page-filling to be told that 'commercial glucose/electrolyte solutions may be used for oral rehydration' (everyone knows they may – the question is under what circumstances). I totally disagree with the statement (p156) that patients with a partial gastrectomy should be given iron supplements . . . and a *monthly* . . . injection of . . . *cyanocobalamin* 1000 micrograms (amazed italics added). Proof-reading and editing are of the usual 1980s standard, but pruritus is spelled right every time – except once.

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The Lumbar Spine and Back Pain, third edition, edited by M.I.V. Jayson. Pp. xii + 462, illustrated. Churchill Livingstone, Edinburgh, London, Melbourne, New York, 1987. £60.00.

Back pain remains an enigma to most clinicians, even those often treating it, largely because it is difficult to establish a true pathological diagnosis.

Alternative medicine practitioners often attribute problems to a loss of true 'vertebral alignment'. These claims are difficult to verify by conventional techniques. Nevertheless, patients are often grateful for their treatment using their own techniques.

For those clinicians who face the difficulties of accurate diagnosis and logical treatment based on a complete understanding of the pathology, this book will be a valuable source of reference.

The individual authors, of which there are more than 30, have retained their individual style and opinion, but nevertheless avoided overlapping too much, with the possible exception of the problems of spinal deformity, tumours, and the paediatric spine, each aspect of back pain has been covered with a chapter.

Students of biochemistry and biomechanics will find much in this book to aid understanding, and the chapters on radiology facet, joint pathology and spinal stenosis, present a full picture of the clinical problem very clearly, and are to be recommended.

Other aspects of back pain are given adequate treatment. If there is a bias in this book it is towards the conservative end of the treatment spectrum, but I believe it contains much for surgeons and physicians alike. Its best feature lies in the large number of references at the end of each chapter, which provides thorough review of the background, although the reference in the first chapter, requiring the student to read the previous edition because 'no new major insights have been

acquired' could also be taken as a comment on the whole volume.

I am sure this book deserves a place in the library of most clinicians dealing with back pain.

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Principles and Practice of Virology, edited by A.J. Zuckerman, J.E. Banatvala and J.R. Pattison. Pp. ix + 590, illustrated. John Wiley, Chichester, New York, Brisbane, Toronto and Singapore, 1987. £58.00.

With unsuspected new viruses being reported steadily as the years go by, with new evidence linking viruses to the induction of human cancer, and with the AIDS epidemic presenting mankind with a problem of unprecedented gravity, any new book on clinical virology is to be welcomed. The present volume consists of sixteen chapters, each by a separate author or authors expert in a particular field and ranges across the entire spectrum of viruses which infect man from the alphaviruses right through to zoster virus.

The content of the different chapters varies from those dealing with a particular virus family, herpesviruses, enteroviruses, or poxviruses, to those dealing with agents causing particular clinical manifestations such as acute diarrhoeal diseases or respiratory tract infections. Yet other chapters are concerned with a single disease such as measles, rubella, rabies and so on. This lack of a standard pattern of treatment has led to a certain absence of uniform organization of material which make orientation difficult and the search for a particular type of information rather confusing. Thus, the busy hospital microbiologist may find considerable difficulty in unearthing the indications for abortion during primary CMV infection in the first three months of pregnancy which is hidden away in the text although mentioned in the index, whilst the rarity or otherwise of congenital varicella infection is not mentioned nor is the severity of infection with this virus during pregnancy. Certainly the British PHLS guidelines on this condition regard it as a problem and unlike the present book recommend the administration of zoster-immune globulin.

As with any multi-author compilation, the different contributions vary considerably in usefulness. The general standard is refreshingly high but there are nevertheless certain quite outstandingly good sections such as that on hepatitis viruses by Zuckerman himself and papovaviruses by McCance and Gardner. In contrast one or two of the chapters are less than helpful.

If the editors had insisted on applying the excellent organization of the best chapters throughout the book the volume would have been much improved. It would also have been improved by more rigorous editing than appears to have been the case. Abbreviations are introduced without explanation or with explanations on some subsequent page and certain gross errors have been allowed to slip through. The Lucké virus is not a virus from toads but from the North American leopard frog, the Epstein-Barr virus was not discovered by Pulvertaft, and the chapter on human slow

infections is marred by the bland assumption that the so-called prion protein is responsible for the causation of the central nervous system diseases of this type.

Nevertheless, the value of this book is considerable and its appearance at this time of major progress in virology is to be welcomed. It will be a valuable and up-to-date addition to the reference texts available to the clinical virologist in the AIDS-troubled times ahead.

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Renal Transplantation, edited by Marvin R. Garovoy and Ronald D. Guttman. Pp. xiv + 446, illustrated. Churchill Livingstone, New York, Edinburgh, London, Melbourne, 1986. £47.50.

After nearly 30 years, the practice of renal transplantation has now come of age. It is only fitting that an experimental procedure has become an art, and the multidisciplinary nature of this art has necessarily meant that no one person could be expected to master the many facets of the practice of transplantation.

In producing this book, the editors have gathered a representative array of experts who have set about producing in simple but comprehensive form, a very readable manual. All the contributors are from the United States of America and Canada, and this reflects in the terminology that is used. This however does not detract from its use in international transplant circles. Indeed, although there is controversy on many aspects of renal transplantation, these have all been properly reflected by the different authors in their presentations. The editors have, in the space of 446 pages and 15 chapters, taken the readers through the procedures that one may meet and practice in looking after patients in end-state renal failure. The early chapters bring home the fact that dialysis and transplantation are complementary forms of therapy and, indeed the whole basis of selection and preparation of patients for either form of treatment is well documented. It is fitting that the chapters on 'Immunosuppression Following Transplantation' should actually precede that of 'The Surgical Aspects of Renal Transplantation' and 'The Diagnosis and Management of Rejection'. The authors of this section have in fact delved not only into the historical aspects of immunosuppression, but highlighted the recent developments, especially in relation to monoclonal antibodies and total lymph node irradiation. A very comprehensive discussion relates to the use of cyclosporin, azathioprine, and prednisolone. I was pleased to note that there is a section relating to the individual variability and individualisation of therapy in management.

The surgical aspects of kidney transplantation occupy about 30 pages. In this space the authors have managed to compress not only all aspects of surgical technique and peri-operative evaluation and care, but indeed mention some of the complications that can occur. I found the diagrams relating to the surgical techniques somewhat inadequate. The authors compensate with an extremely comprehensive bibliography in this chapter. The prime complication of the practice of transplantation is rejection and this has adequate