Book reviews

Cell-Mediated Immunity and Resistance to Infection. WHO Tech. Rep. Ser. No. 519. 1973 Pp. 64. (65p)

The role of specifically sensitized cells in the reaction to antigenic stimulation has been receiving increasing attention since 1942 when Landsteiner and Chase first demonstrated that tuberculin sensitivity in guinea-pigs could be passively transferred by living peritoneal exudate cells but not by serum antibodies. The current state of knowledge of the nature and function of the cells responsible for this and similar reactions of delayed hypersensitivity is admirably summarized in this recent WHO publication. Despite the compression of a vast amount of factual information into a remarkably small volume, the text is commendably readable and covers far more than the title suggests. In addition to the central theme, namely the characteristics of cell-mediated resistance to various types of infection, ranging from viruses to metazoa, there are useful sections on the aberrant functioning of cell-mediated immunity, on means of recognizing such aberrant or deficient functions, on autoimmunity, and finally on prophylaxis.

As in similar WHO publications, there is a useful bibliography but no half-tone illustrations. The clarity of the exposition makes their absence hardly noticeable and no doubt contributes to the extremely low price.

The increasing appreciation of the pathogenic role of immunological reactions in many of the rheumatic diseases should tempt many rheumatologists to glance through this book or even to buy it. The immunological novice may find it hard going but very well worth the effort. L. E. GLYNN

The Radiology of Joint Disease. By V. TZONCHEV, K. SEIDEL, M. DIMITROV and K. HERRMANN, translated by K. HERRMANN. 1973. Pp. 221, 353 figs. Butterworths, London (£14.00)

This atlas has been written by a team of radiologists and rheumatologists of the Peoples Republic of Bulgaria and the German Democratic Republic. Their object was to produce a book which would be a help to clinicians and radiologists in the diagnosis of joint disease. They believe that recently undue emphasis has been placed upon serological diagnosis and that the value of x-ray diagnosis has been underrated. They lay stress on the more common diseases, and the greater part of the book is given over to a description of rheumatoid arthritis and degenerative arthritis.

The first thirty pages of the book deal with methods of radiological examination of the joints and the spine, with a description of the symptomatology of spinal and articular diseases. There follows a brief description of the more common types of arthropathy including those due to metabolic, endocrine, and nervous disorders.

By far the largest part of the book is taken up with illustrations of different forms of arthropathy. The radiographs are produced in the negative form (*i. e.* not facsimile) and quite a number of the illustrations are the result of electronic processing of the original radiographic image. Each radiograph is accompanied by a brief clinical note and a description of the radiological findings and in most cases the diagnosis. The text is, in some instances, unusually colourful, such as the description of the excessive

lippling seen in ochronosis as 'monstrous bulgings in all vertebral margins'. At other times the exact meaning of the text is rather obscure; 'such normative roentgen criteria for the different nosologic units based on further experience should be stated additionally'.

It is likely that many radiologists and clinicians interested in joint disease would be interested in looking at this book, but because of the slight obscurity of the text and the negative radiographic images of the illustrations, it seems unlikely that at £14 per volume it will receive wide acceptance in Great Britain. J. W. LAWS

Beiträge zur Rheumatologie. Vol. 19, Zur Epidemiologie und Soziologie der rheumatoiden Arthritis. Edited by H. TICHY and K. SEIDEL. 1973. Pp. 178, 27 figs. VEB Verlag Volk und Gesundheit, Berlin (DM 59)

The nineteenth volume of the *Beiträge* is devoted to the epidemiology of rheumatoid arthritis (RA). The prevalence of the disease in town, country, and nation and its distribution by occupation, age, sex, geography, climate, etc., is carefully investigated and documented, and since the 'Iron Curtain' is no barrier to the disease, both Eastern and Western Bloc workers have contributed their findings. In this connection, it is interesting to note that the pioneering work of British workers (*e.g.* Kellgren, Lawrence, and Ball) a decade or more ago, should be quoted as a model of exact research in this particular field. The three chapters deal with the social importance of RA, the epidemiology of RA, and the significance of the rheumatoid factor for the pathogenesis of RA.

The rheumatoid factor, like every new clue, has opened fresh vistas to the epidemiologist and his pursuit of it, as described in 36 pages, has been both exciting and laborious, but seems to have ended in a *cul de sac*. 'The rheumatoid factors', writes the contributor in his final assessment, 'are not pathognomonic of RA, and a healthy rheumatoid factor carrier's expectation of contracting the disease is no greater than its incidence in the general population'.

Though all analogies tend to be dangerous, reading through the carefully arranged information, supported as it is by the latest statistical innovations, one cannot, nevertheless, but be reminded, with some admiration, of our less scientifically equipped forebears of the 19th century who, before Koch discovered his bacillus, valiantly grappled with the epidemiology of tuberculosis. The *Beiträge* gives three separate lists for the classification of RA—that of the American Rheumatism Association (1958), that of Rome, partly based on the former (1961), and that of Lawrence of New York (1966). What were the criteria for the early diagnosis of a case of pulmonary tuberculosis before Koch?

This particular volume of the *Beiträge* may not be of interest to the general physician but the specialist will find much that is useful for incorporating in his lectures. As is usual with the *Beiträge*, the format is pleasing and the paper of excellent quality. Each chapter has its own bibliography and, in addition, there is a table of contents, an index of subject matter, and representative samples of the questionnaires used in the various studies.

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