This method of presentation means that it is quite difficult to get an overall picture of a disease process. For example, the changes found in hypertrophic pulmonary osteoarthropathy may be found separately in the sections on the foot, the hand, and knee, but nowhere is there an overall description of the conditions. Consequently one is left with the impression that the commonest changes are a periostitis of the bones of the hand and feet, and the more common periostitis of the forearms and ankles is not stressed. Similarly the radiological changes in acromegaly can, with the aid of the index, be found in 8 different places in the book, but nowhere can an overall description be found.

However, once one has become accustomed to the rather unusual format the book can be read with considerable interest. The numerous illustrations are of a high quality and are often reproduced at the natural size, so that the amount of written text is comparatively small. The radiographs are supplemented by clinical photographs and photographs of pathological sections and specimens. The literary style is clear and simple, even though we are invited to 'quantitate' the heel pad thickness rather than simply to measure it.

This book will be of interest to all who are faced with the differential diagnosis of joint disease. The layout of the book encourages a systematic approach to the examination of radiographs of individual joints. Even the most experienced rheumatologist or radiologist will find much of interest in this comprehensive and painstaking work.

J. W. LAWS

Rheumatoid Arthritis and Related Conditions. Vol. 3. Ed. G. S. Panayi. Pp. 197. £14.00. Churchill Livingstone: Edinburgh. 1979.

This book is the third in the series of Annual Research Reviews of rheumatoid arthritis and related conditions. Dr Panayi and his contributors have reviewed over 650 papers quoted in the *Index Medicus* over the space of one year from July 1977 to June 1978—a truly Herculean task. It is very difficult to review the reviewers unless one has read all the papers listed in this book oneself, but I found that this book achieved its object in stimulating me to delve more deeply into some of the papers quoted. The only criticism that I would have of the authors is that there could be more critical comment of many of the papers they have reviewed, and its dearth leads to a certain blandness in the text, which perhaps is inevitable in a book of this kind. However, there are occasional flashes of controversy, as on p. 143, when the reviewer comments that the use of a combination of steroids, cyclophosphamide, and azathioprine was highly effective in treatment of a chronic arthritis involving dogs, and therefore a justification for this combined chemotherapy in human disease.

As there are no illustrations the book is a trifle expensive at £14.00, but nevertheless it is good value for money and will certainly be a must for our departmental library.

R. D. STURROCK

Clinics in Rheumatic Diseases. Vol. 5. Anti-Rheumatic Drugs. Ed. E. C. Huskisson. Pp. 736. £10.00. Saunders: Philadelphia. 1979.

This volume of the Clinics series, published at a time when the number of antirheumatic drugs is increasing at a bewildering rate, provides us with a much needed review of currently available and evaluated drugs. In the opening chapter Dr Huskisson, the guest editor, outlines his own useful classification of these drugs, and in a later chapter he emphasises the need for a carefully planned approach to treatment.

Several chapters are devoted to the nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs. These are written mainly by physicians from within the pharmaceutical industry, and the characteristics of these drugs including their pharmacology, toxicology, modes of action, and adverse reactions are considered in detail. The results of clinical trials are also discussed at some length. Here, however, particularly in a book of this nature, I would have preferred a more critical appraisal of the reported findings.

The so-called 'specific' drugs which are used in the treatment of rheumatoid arthritis are considered in the following chapters. There is an extremely comprehensive account of D-penicillamine and a rather shorter section on gold. The present-day approach to the use of these drugs, particularly penicillamine, is discussed in a very clear and constructive way. The chapter on levamisole, however, despite being very informative, is, I feel, somewhat overoptimistic about its place in the treatment of rheumatoid arthritis. Is it really such a well established drug? At this point in the book I would have welcomed an additional chapter on the immunosuppressant drugs, but, as Dr Huskisson points out, some omissions were inevitable.

I particularly enjoyed reading the sections on the treatment of systemic lupus erythematosus, gout, and Paget's disease. Recent thoughts about drug therapy in these conditions are expertly and concisely discussed. Dr Hughes pleads the case for a conservative approach to therapy in systemic lupus and I found the review of Paget's disease by Dr Russell extremely valuable. Despite my minor criticisms, Dr Huskisson and his team of authors must be congratulated on producing a balanced account of the current drug management of the rheumatic diseases. It should be read, now rather than later, by all those with an interest in the treatment of these disorders.

MICHAEL WEBLEY

Understanding Cardiology. By D. H. Davies and W. P. Nelson. Pp. 450. £16.70. Butterworths: Sevenoaks, Kent. 1978.

Covering nearly all one needs to know for the clinical diagnosis and investigation of heart disease, this book must be among the most readable texts available today. The preface states it is for medical students and suggests that house staff and members of ancillary professions might find it useful too. This is unduly modest, as most clinicians, senior and junior, would find it of great help,