Book reviews

Scientific Basis of Rheumatology. Ed. G. S. Panayi. Pp. 294. £25.00. Churchill Livingstone: Edinburgh. 1982.

This new book is an admirable collection of essays on the many and varied aspects of connective tissue disease. Along with many others, not least Professor Ian Duthie, I have long believed that some infection was the initiating event in the pathogenesis of inflammatory diseases of connective tissue. I was therefore particularly interested in the first chapter, which deals with the infective aetiology and indicates how the many aspects of inflammatory connective tissue disease dealt with in subsequent chapters could be explained by an initial infective event. It is perhaps significant that the editor has chosen to introduce the book with this chapter.

Experimental models of connective tissue diseases have always provoked lively interest and stimulated much research, and these are discussed with shrewd economy in Chapter 2. The editor's own current interest is expressed in a chapter on possible genetic susceptibility to rheumatic diseases. As further logical extensions of the introductory 2 chapters there are excellent sections dealing with cellular immunity, immune complexes, antinuclear and antiglobulin antibodies, and inflammatory mediators.

As a reminder that collagen, articular cartilage, and bone are the structures ultimately involved in the rheumatic diseases, these subjects are covered comprehensively. The more clinical aspects presented in this book include an extensive survey of amyloidosis, a discussion of the recently recognised relationship between osteoarthritis and crystal deposition, and a consideration of the slow-acting agents and their mechanism of action in rheumatoid arthritis. We are also reminded that proper clinical assessment is ultimately of primary importance when evaluating efficacy of therapy as well as in the evolution of theories of aetiology. When dealing with the end results of inflammatory and degenerative joint disease, the preceding events may not always be of particular interest to the rheumatologist working in conjunction with the orthopaedic surgeon, and a section on the biomechanical aspects of joint replacement is rightly included in this book. This chapter also includes an unusually intelligible (for the clinician) exposition of the physical properties of joint lubrication, which is an instructive contribution.

For its size this is a valuable and most comprehensive book, and the extensive bibliography provides access to virtually limitless information for the specialist and non-specialist alike.

J. N. MCCORMICK

Applied Drug Therapy of the Rheumatic Diseases. By H. A. Bird and V. Wright. Pp. 309. £15.00. Wright-PSG: Bristol. 1982.

This is an excellent and much needed review in depth of the subject of medication in the rheumatic diseases, including the problems that may arise with surgical implants. It is well researched, with an excellent bibliography at the end of each chapter for further reading. The authors do not hesitate to speculate, sometimes with a gratifyingly outrageous tongue-in-cheek approach. Not everybody will agree with all their views on, for example, second-line therapy in rheumatoid arthritis, but I believe all rheumatologists will find it a thoughtful, useful, and very enjoyable book to read. There are helpful chapters on animal models and drug trials, and even a sally at unconventional treatments.

I think the authors are greatly to be congratulated on producing a valuable textbook to have on any rheumatologist's bookshelf, or in any departmental library, and I warmly recommend it.

A K THOULD

Advances in Inflammation Research. Vol. 3. **Rheumatoid Arthritis.** Eds. M. Ziff, G. P. Velo, S. Gorini. Pp. 366. US \$59.84. Raven Press: New York. 1982.

This volume is made up of a number of papers presented at an international symposium on rheumatoid arthritis which was held in Verona in 1980. The 31 contributions thus form a series of largely unrelated essays dealing to a considerable extent with immunopathogenesis and the influence thereon of drugs.

Most of the current talking-points are touched upon in the essays: cellular events and interactions; inflammatory mechanisms and mediators; immune complexes and complement; immunogenetics; and so on. The reader is taken into the realms of PEGG, GSH, SOD, and the respiratory burst. Some of the papers, although short, contrive to present a critical overview of their subject, such as that on 'Plasmapheresis and lymphopheresis' by Ryan and Hughes. Others, such as 'Regional bone calcium turnover rate in rheumatoid arthritis', by Bergmann and colleagues, are individual research studies given as the sort of paper which normally appears in a scientific journal.

Each paper has a reasonably comprehensive bibliography, and the book has an adequate subject index. It is an undoubtedly important collection of articles covering many recent developments in the field.

J. T. SCOTT