References

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Obituary

Irwin Isdale

Dr Irwin Isdale, Vice-President of the South-East Asian and Pacific League against Rheumatism, died suddenly in England on 21 November 1982 aged 58. He had just run successfully the Australasian Congress of Rheumatology in Rotorua, 1982, and had come over with his wife to England to participate in meetings in London at Hammersmith and the Heberden Society, of which he was one of the most respected Antipodean members, and finally in Amsterdam.

We in England first knew him in the 1950s, a vigorous, energetic physician full of common sense

(like most New Zealanders) and participating with his wife Lynn fully in the scientific, professional, and cultural life of this country, first at Hammersmith and then at Taplow. He returned to put Rotorua on the map as one of the foremost rheumatological centres in the East. Outside rheumatology, in which he attained a continental and international reputation, he was an expert skier and had wide interests – gardening, carpets, and porcelain among them. His numerous friends will greatly miss his company and camaraderie. Besides his loved wife, Lynn, he leaves two daughters, one in medicine the other in dentistry.

E. G. L. B.

Book reviews

Glycosaminoglycans and Proteoglycans in Physiological and Pathological Processes of Body Systems. Eds. R. S. Varma, R. Varma, P. Warren. Pp. 520. SFr. 496. S. Karger: Basle. 1982.

This book is an advanced text on the biochemistry and pathology of proteoglycans. It is a notable attempt to collate together all the information from a disparate literature and to review what is currently known. The chapters are presented on each topic by selected authors and are of varied scope and style. However, this may reflect the quantity and quality of published work which is drawn upon and which in some areas is particularly thin, rather than reflecting different standards of assessment.

The book begins with some good clear sections on the basic biochemistry of proteoglycans, but the major part of the text gives detailed accounts, facts, and figures of what is known of proteoglycans and glycosaminoglycans in the tissues and organs of the body and their changes in disease. It also provides an account of lysosomal enzyme disorders in particular as they involve glycosaminoglycan degradation, with chapters on the possible involvement of proteoglycans in tumour growth and mixed tissue pathology, such as cystic fibrosis, amyloidosis, and connective tissue aging.

The strength of this book is undoubtedly in the breadth of coverage, and it forms an excellent reference work for anyone wishing to gain access to the literature on any aspect of

proteoglycan that is related to pathology. The book contains much information, but it may be argued that some of the reporting is uncritical. However, where information is thin, some is perhaps better than none at all.

There is a clear need for a 'harvest' of the literature at this time, and although the price will discourage casual ownership, this book will provide a useful stock of information for the specialist biochemist and pathologist to delve into for several years to come.

T. E. HARDINGHAM

Rheumatology in General Practice. By M. Rogers and N. Williams. Pp. 266. £7.50. Churchill Livingstone: Edinburgh. 1982.

This is the third in a series of books forming part of a 'library of general practice' to be published by Churchill Livingstone. It is jointly written by a consultant rheumatologist and a general practitioner who has a particular interest in rheumatic diseases. The authors have deliberately avoided the standard arrangement favoured by many textbooks of dealing with one disease after another. Instead they have chosen a regional approach, devoting chapters to disorders of the neck, the upper limb, low back, and the lower limb from the diagnostic and the therapeutic points of view. These chapters are preceded by more general ones on