CORRESPONDENCE

Request for Reprints of Articles on Stress and the Adaptive Hormones

The Editors wish to commend the following letter from Professor Selye and his co-editor of the Annual Reports on Stress. Professor Selye is well known to members of the Heberden Society through his Heberden Oration in 1950 and his important research work on stress in the aetiology and pathology of rheumatoid disease. These Annual Reports are of great interest and value and deserve the careful study and support of all workers in rheumatology.

To the Editors of the Annals of the Rheumatic Diseases.

Dear Sirs.—In perusing the current literature with which your Journal is concerned, we note that an ever increasing number of articles deal with problems pertaining to research on “stress” and the so-called “adaptive hormones” (ACTH, STH, corticoids, adrenergic substances, etc.).

We are writing you because, in our opinion, the success of research in this complex and rapidly developing field largely depends upon the prompt availability and evaluation of relevant publications, a task for which we should like to solicit the assistance of your readers.

In 1950, our Institute initiated the publication of a series of reference volumes entitled “Annual Reports on Stress” (Acta Medical Publishers, Montreal) in which the entire current world literature (usually between 2,000 and 4,000 publications) is surveyed every year. Up to now, we have had to compile the pertinent literature partly from medical periodicals, monographs, and abstract journals, and partly from reprints sent to us by the authors themselves. Of all these, reprints have proved to be the best source of data which we felt deserved prompt attention in our annual reports. Hence, in the past, we have sent out several thousand individual reprint requests to authors whom we knew to be currently engaged in research on stress and allied topics.

Even this procedure did not give us the wide coverage which would be desirable, because it is materially impossible to contact all these authors individually and it often takes too much time to get the requested reprints.

It is evident that in order to insure prompt inclusion of publications in the annual reports, these surveys must develop into a co-operative effort between the authors of original papers and the reviewers. This co-operation has been greatly enhanced of late by the publication of announcements, in several medical journals, encouraging investigators interested in stress research to send us their reprints for this purpose as soon as they become available.

We should be grateful if, by the publication of this note, you would bring this problem to the attention of your readers.

We are, Gentlemen,

Very sincerely yours,

Selye, HANS

ALEXANDER HORAVA.

Institute of Experimental Medicine
and Surgery,
University of Montreal, Canada.
January 27, 1953.

BOOK REVIEWS


This comprehensive text-book contains contributions by many well-known German workers. In a work of this nature, overlap is inevitable and, to the student, sometimes confusing. Thus, in Hochrein’s excellent chapter on rheumatic heart disease (Chapter 9), the reader is introduced to the orthodox treatment of this condition, not excluding the use of hormones. In Chapter 13, however, Grote brings evidence to show that diet is the important factor in the prevention of cardiac damage. The unsatisfactory nature of the nomenclatures now in use is reflected in the attempt to evolve a new classification of the rheumatic diseases which is probably more exact but, at the same time, more cumbersome; “acute genuine rheumatism” becomes synonymous with rheumatic fever and “primary chronic genuine rheumatism” with rheumatoid arthritis. This book differs from Anglo-American publications in its emphasis on certain theories and therapies which have seen better days in the West and on others which have not yet achieved recognition. Pyramidon (amido-pyrin) is used in a wide variety of conditions; vaccines, both stock and autogenous, parade through the pages in ever-increasing doses without any attempt being made to explain why the body should react against dead organisms when it fails to do so against live ones; bee-venom, histamine ionization, and spa treatment are all used for sciatica (pp. 142-44), but remedial exercises for the lumbar spine are not mentioned. In a discussion on lumbago (p. 154), it is stated that if it is “one-sided it may lead to scoliosis with convexity towards the sound side”, and Chapter 19 tells us that “periartritic humero-scapularis” is due to faulty posture of the dorsal spine and...
shoulder-girdle; much is made of the function of the trapezius muscle, but the supraspinatus tendon and its syndrome appear to have been sunk without trace. In ankylosing spondylitis, deep x-rays are but briefly mentioned, though for osteo-arthritis they are thought to be the best treatment (p. 118); pride of place in treatment is given to implants of calf-pituitary. The method has now been so simplified that all that is required is to place the hypophysis of a freshly-killed calf in normal saline and implant it in the patient’s buttock, after preliminary infiltration with novocaine and penicillin. A whole page is devoted to the technique of the operation and it is claimed that, after it, neither patient nor implant ever looks back. But it would be interesting to watch the reactions of British patients (and of their buttocks) to this procedure.

The print and paper are of first-class quality, but the illustrations consist mainly of x-ray films, and in a book dealing with the arthritis there is no photograph of a live arthritic joint. The bibliography, massed at the end of the book, is international in character. Finally, one has the impression that German rheumatology, though still encumbered by old-fashioned ideas, is making notable progress and is closing the gap left by the Hitlerian era.

D. Preiskel.


This manual was produced as the result of a survey of arthritis clinics in the metropolitan area of New York which revealed defects in their location, organization, and conduct. Its aim is to point out how such departments can fulfil more effectively the three reasons for their existence: the diagnosis and treatment of patients, the education of physicians in rheumatic and articular disorders, and the promotion of research.

It recommends that the chief of clinic should be a general physician with an active interest and wide experience in the rheumatic diseases, and that his associates should include an orthopaedic surgeon and a physician specializing in physical medicine. Both this recommendation and the one stating that it is desirable that physicians who staff arthritis clinics should have a wide knowledge of internal medicine sufficient to obtain a higher qualification in general medicine will be endorsed by the Empire Rheumatism Council; they follow the recommendation for training as laid down by the recent Committee of the Royal College of Physicians of London.

Emphasis is laid on the necessity for suitable diagnostic facilities and for access to hospital beds where cases can be studied in detail. The chart suggested for the recording of joint findings is rather cumbersome for routine clinical work though it might be useful for research cases.

Much of the manual is devoted to diagnostic criteria for various types of rheumatic and articular disorders, followed by a classification devised for the assessment of improvement in rheumatoid arthritis.

Attention is drawn to the importance of regular clinic conferences at which free discussion can be held on clinical cases, current literature, and the results of therapy. Finally the function of the social worker is described, and the importance of her place in the clinic team is emphasized.

Oswald Savage.

**LIGUE INTERNATIONALE CONTRE LE RHUMATISME**

**EIGHTH INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS, 1953**

(Second Announcement)

The Eighth International Congress of Rheumatic Diseases will be held at Geneva from August 24 to 28, 1953, under the auspices of the Ligue Internationale contre le Rhumatisme. It is being organized by the Swiss Society of Physical Medicine and Rheumatology under the presidency of Prof. E. Jarlov (Copenhagen). The programme, which has been drawn up with the collaboration of some of the most eminent scientific authorities in rheumatological studies, will include the following series of discussions:

1. **Connective Tissue** (J. H. Kellgren, Manchester, G. Teilum, Copenhagen, and E. Hartmann, Göttingen).


3. **Surgery in the Treatment of Rheumatism** (R. Judet and R. Merle d’Aubigné, Paris, will discuss the end-results of surgery of the hip).

4. **Chronic Rheumatism** (W. Tegner, London, and H. Rusk, New York, will demonstrate the possibilities of rehabilitation and employment of those disabled by rheumatism).

These sessions will be reserved for the presentation of individual papers on the subjects set. Authors are asked to have their papers approved by the Executive Committee of the National League to which they belong.

Apart from these meetings and discussions, scientific films will be shown, and there will be a technical exhibition (medical literature, drugs, and physiotherapy apparatus), and also a scientific exhibition in which members are invited to demonstrate the results of their researches.

On Wednesday, August 26, members of the Congress will be received by the civic authorities of Aix-