BOOK REVIEWS


This synopsis is intended for the general practitioner who is faced with a rheumatological problem. Consequently, the authors have omitted non-essentials, as far as possible, and concentrated on the two indispensible—diagnosis and treatment. Information is imparted by means of question and answer, and by looking up the relevant chapter the reader may find the solution to his problem. From this it must be concluded that the authors have compiled a variation of “Any Questions?”; the text is well illustrated with photographs, diagrams, and x-ray films, and abounds in useful information and clinical observations which merit respect, though not necessarily always full agreement. For example, it may not be realized that partial or complete rupture of the supraspinatus tendon is found in 10 to 15 per cent. of all autopsies; that this incidence rises to 70 per cent. in those who have passed the psalmist’s span of life; that fraying of the long head of biceps is present in 20 to 50 per cent. of persons over the age of 70, and that correlation with symptoms during life indicates that such lesions can be silent or latent; that phenylbutazone is the drug of choice in ankylosing spondylitis and that its administration in the early stages will arrest the disease—and so on and so forth. Incidentally, the term “ankylosing spondylitis” is once more under attack by the authors on the grounds that it does not incorporate the salient feature of the disease (involvement of the sacro-iliac joints), and arouses despair in the patient by its suggestion of inevitable invalidism. They suggest instead the use of the term pelvi-spondylite rhumatismale—which all goes to show that the practice of pouring new wine into old bottles has lost none of its attractions.

The quality of printing and of paper is above reproach. There are two special features which are worthy of mention—a separate chapter on bone pathology, which is of great interest, and an ample supplement in which the pharmaceutical houses and purveyors of orthopaedic appliances have found full scope for their talents. A table of contents is provided but no index. The volume will prove to be of interest both to general practitioners and to rheumatologists, but its price is rather high by British standards.

DAVID PREISKEL.


This book may be described as a simple, systematic study of the rheumatic diseases. For the specialist everything in it is familiar, but for the student and the general practitioner it offers a comprehensive survey of the “rheumatic problem”. The material, especially the section on treatment, is well up-to-date. There are 57 useful photographic reproductions and some interesting statistical data. Although rheumatism, in its various forms, is supposed to be commoner in the temperate climates, it is quite obvious from the text that it presents a considerable problem in South America.

PAUL B. WOOLLEY.


It is difficult to imagine a more specialized text than this one—187 pages devoted almost solely to the study of synovial fluid. Needless to say this book has been written for the specialist and it contains all, and even more, that he need ever know about the lubricating liquid. The author believes that joint aspiration should be carried out as a routine and the fluid examined in the same manner as a haematologist would do a blood-count. Samplings of fluid can give some indication as to the value of any treatment being carried out.

There are ample illustrations and tables and the bibliography can be described as complete.

PAUL B. WOOLLEY.

CANADIAN RHEUMATISM ASSOCIATION

Annual Meeting, 1958

At the annual meeting of the Canadian Rheumatism Association, held at Vancouver, B.C., the scientific session comprised eleven papers dealing with original reports, reviews, and clinical observations.

Dr. Russel L. Cecil and Dr. A. Almon Fletcher, and Mr. J. A. Gairdner, a Toronto philanthropist, were elected honorary members of the Association.

Dr. John F. L. Woodbury (Halifax) is the new President, and other incoming members of the executive committee are Dr. J. Bruce Frain, first vice-president; Dr. Metro Ogryzlo, second vice-president; Dr. de Guise Vaillancourt, secretary; Dr. John R. Martin, treasurer; Dr. Joseph A. Blais and Dr. H. Garfield Kelly.

The Canadian Rheumatism Association has
decided to accept the invitation of the President of the Heberden Society to participate with the British group in a joint scientific session to be held at Buxton, England, in 1959. The annual business meeting will, however, be held in June, 1959, in Washington, D.C., at the time of the Second Congress of the Pan-American League against Rheumatism.

Gairdner Foundation

The first international awards in arthritis and heart disease, totalling $40,000, have been announced, and medical scientists from England, the U.S.A., and Canada are included among the seven recipients.

Gairdner Foundation Award of Merit to Dr. Alfred Blalock and Dr. Helen B. Taussig (Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, Md) for their initial development of what is known to the public as the "blue-baby operation".

Gairdner Foundation Annual Awards to Dr. Harry M. Rose and Dr. Charles Ragan (New York City) for their discovery of the first practical laboratory test for the diagnosis of rheumatoid arthritis; to Prof. W. D. M. Paton and Prof. Eleanor Zaimis (London, England) for their discovery of the first drugs to be proven practical and effective in the treatment of high blood pressure; to Dr. W. G. Bigelow (Toronto, Ontario, Canada) for his development of the technique of hypothermia, or the "deep-freeze" operation for heart surgery.

II. PAN-AMERICAN CONGRESS ON RHEUMATIC DISEASES

Washington, D.C., and Bethesda, Md., U.S.A., 1959

In the years 1940 to 1942, when Dr. Ralph Pemberton, then President of the International League against Rheumatism, was travelling in South America, and Dr. Aníbal Ruiz-Moreno, President of the Argentine Society of Rheumatology, was visiting rheumatism centres in the United States, Dr. Ruiz-Moreno conceived the idea of organizing the rheumatism societies of the two Americas into a Pan-American League. His idea was greeted with enthusiasm, and by June, 1944, the organization was completed.

The countries now belonging to the Pan-American League against Rheumatism are: Argentina, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Cuba, Mexico, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, U.S.A., and Venezuela.

In 1953, at the time of the X International Congress on Rheumatic Diseases, preparations were begun for the First Pan-American Congress, which was held in Brazil in 1955 and was attended by 239 representatives of sixteen countries. The scientific sessions were a signal success and the social aspects of the programme were so delightful that all participants received a deep impression of the polished culture and warm hospitality of their Brazilian hosts.

Arrangements for the Second Congress

The Pan-American Committee and local members of the American Rheumatism Association are the organizers of the II Pan-American Congress, which will open at Washington, D.C., on June 2, 1959, at the Pan-American Union, and will be held in conjunction with the 23rd Annual Meeting of the American Rheumatism Association.

On June 3, our guests will be entertained at private dinner parties in the homes of our Washington hosts. On June 4, a reception will be held at the Capitol, after which members will be able to watch a baseball match or attend a horse race meeting. The official banquet preceded by a cocktail party will be held on June 5 at the Mayflower Hotel. The formal closing ceremony will take place on June 6. Many special events are also being planned for members' ladies and families, and there will be ample time for sightseeing in and around historic Washington.

The Mayflower Hotel, 1127 Connecticut Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C., will be official headquarters for the Congress. Registration will be carried out here for the scientific sessions and social events. An Information Bureau staffed with interpreters will be maintained at all times at the hotel and also at the Clinical Centre, National Institute of Health, Bethesda, Maryland, where some of the scientific sessions will be held.

The official hotels for the Congress are:

Mayflower Hotel (Headquarters),
1127 Connecticut Avenue, N.W.
Blackstone Hotel,
1016 17th Street, N.W.
Burlington Hotel,
1120 Vermont Avenue, N.W.
Young Men's Christian Association (Men only)
1736 G. Street, N.W.