Spondylitis Ankylopoetica—die Bechterewschwche Krankheit. By WOLFGANG DIHLMANN. 1968. Pp. 108, 130 figs. Thieme, Stuttgart. (DM 49·60).

This excellently produced monograph, based on 1,563 cases, covers every aspect of a disease of which the early diagnosis is often beset with difficulties. Not unexpectedly, the bulk of the book is devoted to diagnostic radiology (and even radiography) and is illustrated with numerous x-ray films of impeccable quality in some of which the sacro-iliac joint appearances are demonstrated in accompanying line diagrams. It is at this stage that one realizes that whatever may be the fate of the Anglo-Saxon attempt to join the European Community in the politico-economic sense, a *fait accompli* has been achieved when it comes to the radiological terminology of ankylosing spondylitis. Thus, to say, in a German publication, that a sacro-iliac joint looks like a "Perlschnur" is only to be expected, but this joint may also have a "star sign", a "ghost joint", an *aspect tigré*, and an *aspect pommelé*; in the case of the vertebrae the Anglo-Saxons do even better with "squaring", "filling in", and "shiny corner".

Whereas the standard textbook will describe the classical signs of the disease, this monograph sets out the minutiae of differential diagnosis and stresses early features, *e.g.* destructive changes in the sacro-iliac joints nearly always begin on the iliac side. Therapy, which occupies barely six pages and would probably occupy even less were the causal mechanism known, follows the traditional pattern, but the emphasis on swimming as the finest remedial exercise deserves wider publicity.

There is very little to criticize in this publication, and the minor one—that the line diagrams illustrating the x-ray appearances of the sacro-iliac joints in Figs 10, 13, 14, and 16 seem to be mirror images—hardly diminishes the descriptive power of the illustrations. The book contains a table of contents, an index, and a list of authors. The price is not excessive in terms of value received. DAVID PREISKEL

Advances in Internal Medicine. Edited by I. SNAPPER and G. H. STOLLERMAN. Vol. 14, 1969. Pp. 367, 53 figs. Wiley, London. (112s.).

Like its thirteen predecessors this volume contains a number of authoritative essays covering a range of topics in which progress is rapidly advancing.

The subject of most direct relevance to the study of rheumatic diseases is that of the changing epidemiology of rheumatic fever and acute glomerulonephritis by G. H. Stollerman and Iris A. Pearce. The relation of streptococcal epidemiology, invasive properties, and virulence to the attack rate of the two post-streptococcal diseases is fully documented, although the authors do not go on to discuss current theories of pathogenesis in terms of immunological mechanisms. By contrast, the account by A. J. L. Strauss of myasthenia gravis, autoimmunity, and the thymus embraces the whole matter, from the historical background of myasthenia and the development of the autoimmune concept to a detailed description of the possible roles of serological and cellular types of immunity and their clinical and therapeutic implications. A further immunological paper is contributed by D. B. Amos and D. L. Stickel who write on human transplantation antigens.

Other contributions deal with calcitonin; surfactant of the lung; surgery in obstructive coronary artery disease; the metabolic effects of alcohol; and the control of aldosterone secretion by the renin-angiotensin system and by corticotropin.

Dr. Stollerman remarks in his foreword that "the days of the giants are probably over for internal medicine". One of the problems facing the editors of this mixed-grill type of production is that of determining to what extent its contributions shall be detailed reviews of value to those particularly interested in the various subjects, and to what extent they shall be aimed at the less specialized reader. "Advances in Internal Medicine" succeeds well in both; its papers are comprehensive with full bibliographies, but they remain readable and informative for the general physician. J. T. SCOTT.

XII INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF RHEUMATOLOGY

Prague, Czechoslovakia, October 6-11, 1969

Contributions received after May 10, 1969, will be accepted, but will not appear in the printed programme. Applications to attend the congress should be addressed to the General Secretary, Sokolska 31, Praha 2, Czechoslovakia.