

Annals of the Rheumatic Diseases

A journal of clinical rheumatology and
connective tissue research

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Book Review

Beiträge zur Rheumatologie HANS TICHY and KURT SEIDEL. 1969. Pp 146, 35 figs. Veb Verlag Volk Gesundheit, Berlin (£4 13s.)

Terms such as "soft tissue rheumatism", "muscular rheumatism", "myalgia", "fibrositis", etc., have all too often been used in the past, though many doubt the existence of such entities. The XIVth volume of the Beiträge deals exhaustively with the subject in an attempt finally to settle the exact order of these manifestations in the Pantheon of the Rheumatic Diseases. For the study, the authors used 200 patients suffering from "muscular rheumatism" as evidenced by stiffness, interference with locomotor function, and skeletal pain mainly in the cervical and lumbar regions. After a careful history and clinical examination they were subjected to X-ray investigation, muscle biopsy, and humoral and serological tests with particular emphasis on the presence or absence of autoantibodies. The controls were a similar number of healthy individuals and an even greater number of cases of rheumatic fever or its cardiac complications. Biopsy established that no inflammatory changes were to be

found in the muscle of patients with "muscular rheumatism", but their autoantibody production was decidedly greater than that in healthy persons. However, it is pointed out that antibody formation may occur in simple non-microbial tissue disturbances. It was also noted that every sufferer from "muscular rheumatism" (mean age 46) had some skeletal dysfunction, such as a disc lesion, scoliosis, etc. Nevertheless, after taking all the evidence into account, the final decision was that "muscular rheumatism" was an entity which did not belong either to inflammatory or to degenerative rheumatism but tended, with increasing chronicity, to gravitate to the latter. Whether justice was done in this case is still open to argument but at least it was seen to be done.

This volume conforms to the usual excellent standard expected of the Beiträge series. It is accompanied by an extensive international bibliography and a table of contents. There is also an appendix with six photographs illustrating the technique of muscle biopsy and 29 microscopy slides. The price is on the high side for 137 pages of text.

DAVID PREISKEL

Notes

Heberden Society

Officers, 1970

<i>President:</i>	Dr. A. G. S. Hill, M.C., F.R.C.P.E.	<i>Senior Hon. Sec.:</i>	Dr. H. L. F. Currey, M.R.C.P.
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Ordinary Members of Executive Committee (limited to six):

Dr. J. A. Cosh	Dr. A. J. Popert	Dr. W. R. M. Alexander
Professor K. W. Walton	Dr. P. H. N. Wood	Dr. W. W. Buchanan

Programme for 1970

<i>February 27:</i>	Clinical meeting, Stoke Mandeville Hospital, Aylesbury
<i>May 23-24:</i>	Combined meeting with the French League against Rheumatism, Paris
<i>September 25:</i>	Heberden Round, by invitation of Dr. W. R. M. Alexander, at the Royal College of Physicians, Edinburgh
<i>October 17:</i>	B.M.A./Heberden Society, Bath
<i>November 20-21:</i>	Annual General Meeting and Dinner, Royal College of Physicians, London

VII European Rheumatology Congress

Brighton, June 6 to 11, 1971

Provisional scientific programme

At the suggestion of the Bureau of the European League, a completely new form of scientific programme is being planned. Most of the sessions at previous League Congresses have been devoted to the presentation of many 10-minute "free papers". It is proposed that at Brighton there will be four types of scientific session:

- (a) **Formal lectures by invited international experts.** There will be one lecture each day in a large auditorium with full translation.
- (b) **Symposia.** These will be the main substance of the Congress. They will be held in the large auditorium with full translation. Each symposium will be introduced by four invited speakers, followed by a general discussion. These sessions will absorb a majority of the submitted abstracts, and authors will be asked, instead of reading papers formally, either to act as introducers, or to participate in the general discussion.
- (c) **Round table discussions.** These less formal sessions will be held in smaller rooms, without official trans-

lation. They are designed particularly for specialised subjects of interest to limited numbers of members. Again, authors of relevant abstracts, will be invited to participate either as introducers or as discussants.

- (d) **Free papers.** A limited number of 10-minute papers will be presented.

Members will be invited to submit abstracts in the usual way before the Congress. All accepted abstracts will be published in the official handbook to be issued at the Congress. However, only a small proportion of these abstracts will be selected to be read as "free papers". The remainder will be used as a basis for selecting topics for symposia and round table conferences, and their authors will be invited either to introduce one of these sessions, or to join in the free discussion.

These plans aim at providing better opportunities for participation and communication.

Facilities will also be available for scientific exhibits.

Detailed information will be included in the circular to be sent out during March 1970.

Chairman of organizing committee: Dr. A. G. S. Hill

Congress Secretariat: c/o M. C. G. Andrews, Arthritis and Rheumatism Council, Faraday House,
8 Charing Cross Road, London, W.C.2
Telephone 01-240 0871
Telegrams Rheumatic London WC2

II South African Conference on Rheumatism, Arthritis, and Allied Disorders

The second South African Congress will be held in Cape Town from March 23 to 26, 1970. Summaries of intended papers and any other enquiries should be sent to the Organizing Secretary, P.O. Box 1375, Cape Town, immediately.

Course in Rheumatology/Immunology

London, April 13 to 17, 1970

Theme: Basic survey of immunological principles and their relationship to diseases, especially to connective tissue.

Organizers: Professor E. G. L. Bywaters and Dr. P. J. L. Holt, Royal Postgraduate Medical School, Ducane Road, London, W.12.

Further details from: Mr. J. Davidson, Assistant Secretary, at the above address.

Obituary

Hans Reiter, 1881-1969

The death of Professor Hans Reiter took place on November 25, 1969, at the age of 88 years. He was honorary Professor of Hygiene in the University of Berlin; in 1916 he re-described the triple syndrome which is generally termed Reiter's disease.