

Annals of the Rheumatic Diseases

A journal of clinical rheumatology and
connective tissue research

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Book review

An Introduction to Clinical Rheumatology. Edited by MICHAEL MASON and H. L. F. CURREY. 1970. Pp. 343, 121 figs. Pitman Medical and Scientific Publishing Company, London. (£3·50).

No short textbook dealing adequately with the rheumatic diseases has previously been available for medical students. The large standard works, such as those of Copeman in this country and Hollander in the U.S.A., are detailed reference volumes, too comprehensive for general undergraduate teaching. Other forms of literature are supplied to students by some rheumatology units, particularly the *Reports on Rheumatic Diseases*, published by the Arthritis and Rheumatism Council, but these are intended primarily for general practitioners and it is doubtful if they have much impact upon medical students as a whole.

The editors of *An Introduction to Clinical Rheumatology* and their colleagues at the London Hospital have now successfully remedied this deficiency. Well produced and generously illustrated, the book sets out present concepts of the rheumatic diseases in a competent and authoritative manner and will undoubtedly become popular with undergraduates and doctors, as the teaching of rheumatology, an integral specialty within the framework of internal medicine, develops in our medical schools.

Multiple authorship by members of a single clinical team is seen to particular advantage in a book of this type. Individual contributions have been carefully welded together to create a uniformity of style, intentionally didactic, succinct, and easily readable. Some of the chapters—especially those written by the editors themselves—are of a particularly high standard, bearing as they do the mark of extensive experience and research in this field. There are useful appendices on the clinical examination of the locomotor system and laboratory investigations.

For future editions the editors may wish to consider

various minor modifications. The standard of illustration is high generally, but not invariably—for example, the editors could probably pull out a clearer example of atlanto-axial subluxation than that shown in Fig 3. 18, while the beginner might have a little difficulty in identifying with certainty his syndesmophytes (not arrowed) in Fig 5. 4. Some readers may find that the fashionable tendency towards initial abbreviations, although defined, has been developed in places to the point of irritation ('It seems likely, therefore, that CDLE is fundamentally a form of SLE' or 'This holds true, of course, also for GCA. So, at present, it is not clear whether there is a "primary" form of polymyalgia separate from GCA. This provides a therapeutic dilemma, for while a diagnosis of GCA demands corticosteroid treatment . . .'). A colour plate of various skin lesions, so commonly encountered in rheumatic diseases and of such importance in diagnosis, would have been a great improvement. It may be questioned whether the brave attempt to condense a large part of modern immunological theory into seven short pages is really successful, although it is difficult to see how this problem can be handled in an entirely satisfactory manner. Finally, although the omission of more than a few footnote references here and there was obviously a deliberate editorial decision, a short bibliography enabling a student or doctor to pursue any points interesting him would have been advantageous.

The study and practice of rheumatic diseases is still in its infancy—anyone doubting this has only to look at the list of contents, a string of names representing arbitrarily-classified diseases and syndromes, usually of unknown cause. Problems are becoming defined, however, and methods of investigation and treatment are being developed, so that the specialty of rheumatology is one of increasing attraction. It is all the more important for the student to be educated and interested early in his training, and to this end the authors of *An Introduction to Clinical Rheumatology* have contributed significantly.

J. T. SCOTT

Notes

Editorship of the Annals

Dr. J. T. Scott has been appointed Editor in succession to the late Dr. Copeman. Dr. Scott, formerly Assistant Editor, is Consultant Physician at Charing Cross and West London Hospitals, and is also Honorary Physician and Deputy Director of the Kennedy Institute. Dr. H. L. F. Currey (*London Hospital*) and Prof. V. Wright (*Leeds*) join Dr. Scott as Associate Editors.

The Editorial Committee has been reinforced by the addition of Drs. C. G. Barnes, E. B. D. Hamilton, Helen Muir, and Prof. R. B. Duthie, following the retirement of Dr. E. Lewis-Faning, Prof. J. H. Kellgren, and Sir Henry Osmond-Clarke, whose services over the past 20 years have been of such great value to the growth and development of the journal.

European League against Rheumatism

VII Congress, Brighton, June, 1971

Participants are reminded that they should attempt to register before March 1, after which date the registration fee is increased. Details of the Congress and registration forms are contained in the Third Announcement, which may be obtained from the Congress Secretariat, Arthritis and Rheumatism Council, Faraday House, 8-10 Charing Cross Road, London WC2H 0HN (Telephone: 01-240 0871).

Distinguished invited speakers include Prof. Benvenuto Pernis (*Genoa*): The lymphocyte; Dr.

Morten Simonsen (*Copenhagen*): Perspectives in transplantation; Dr. Dennis H. Le Croisette (*Pasadena, Calif.*): Space and medicine; Mr. John Charnley (*Wrightington Hospital, Lancs.*): The current status of total hip replacement in the surgery of the hip joint; Dr. J. F. Bach (*Paris*): Antigen recognition and its suppression.

The opera to be performed at Glyndebourne on June 8 will be 'The Queen of Spades' by Tchaikovsky.

Heberden Society

Programme, 1971

MARCH 19: Heberden Round, to be conducted by Dr. J. T. Scott at the West London Hospital and Kennedy Institute, London

SEPTEMBER 17-18: Meeting in Belfast

NOVEMBER 26-27: Annual general meeting
Heberden Oration (Dr. D. L. Gardner)

Royal Postgraduate Medical School

April 19 - 23, 1971

A course on 'Pharmacological and Therapeutic Advances in Rheumatic and Connective Tissue Diseases' will be held from April 19 to 23, 1971, at the Royal Postgraduate Medical School, Ducane

Road, London, W.12 (organizers Prof. E. G. L. Bywaters and Dr. P. J. L. Holt). Details may be obtained from the Assistant School Secretary.

Rheumatism and trauma

V International Conference of Rheumatic Diseases, Aix-les-Bains, June 28 - July 1, 1972

The Fifth International Conference of Rheumatic Diseases to be held at Aix-les-Bains, France, under the chairmanship of Prof. Trueta (*Oxford*) and Prof. S. de Sèze (*Paris*), will be devoted to the study of post-traumatic syndromes (reflex dystrophy; post-traumatic osteoporosis and stiffness), post-traumatic avascular necrosis, and the role of trauma in the aetiology of rheumatic diseases (rheumatoid arthritis and osteoarthritis).

Two symposia will also be held on 'Sports medicine' and on 'The legal recovery of personal damages in musculoskeletal injury'.

Titles of short papers should be sent in immediately to the following address:

'Conference Internationale', B.P. No. 41, 83, Aix-les-Bains, France.

Joint Secretaries General: F. Forestier, B. Graber-Duvernay, and B. de Reynal.