Book reviews

The Eye in Connective Tissue Disease. By J. Williamson and R. Loudon Brown. (Pp. vii+69; illustrated. £5.95.) Edward Arnold: London. 1978.

This is a useful volume in which the various ocular features of connective tissue diseases are presented in 5 chapters entitled keratoconjunctivitis sicca, scleritis and episcleritis, uveitis in connective tissue disease, miscellaneous disorders, and iatrogenic disease. The authors' intention is to illustrate and provide up to date information on the diagnosis, prognosis, pathology, and management of these conditions. The information is presented in a brief and didactic fashion which will be useful for the practising clinician. The volume is profusely illustrated but, unfortunately, most of the pictures are in black and white and seem to have lost considerable quality in reproduction, especially when compared with a few which are also reproduced in colour. This apart, I would only disagree with a few points such as the labelling of different forms of chronic arthritis in children as juvenile RA.

This book should not be compared with the recently published volume on scleritis by Watson and Hazleman as it is intended as a starting point for further studies rather than as a fully referenced scientific dissertation. It can be thoroughly recommended.

MALCOLM I. V. JAYSON

The Joints and Synovial Fluid. Vol. I Edited by Leon Sokoloff. (Pp. xii+491; illustrated. £29.80.) Academic Press: New York. 1978.

The fast developing field of joint structure and physiology merits a book to bring present knowledge together. The previous standard text from St. Thomas's (Barnett, C. H., Davies, D. V. and MacConaill, M. A. [1961]. *Synovial Joints: Their Function and Mechanics*. Longmans: London) is now quite out of date. Those who have savoured the monograph by Leon Sokoloff on 'The Biology of Osteoarthritis' could think of no one better to do this. Although he is only the editor of this first of 2 volumes on the

subject, Sokoloff's scholarly imprint is stamped on the book. He has succeeded within 491 pages in producing a standard reference work with a comprehensive annotated guide to the literature.

The volume starts imaginatively with a chapter on comparative arthrology by two teachers of veterinary surgery. They have marshalled the information safely into the ark. Perhaps, as Noah found, the only effective way of doing this is somewhat tedious. It is a little unfortunate that their starting point is an unquestioning acceptance of an evolutionary model for which there is limited evidence and a good deal of contradictory data. Their interpretation of the relationship of structure to function provokes the warning that teleology is a lady in whose company it is often pleasurable and profitable to be, but with whom it is seldom advisable to be seen.

The chapter on the embryology of joints leads naturally from this and thence to a discussion of the fine structure. One pleasurable feature is to see how tenaciously authors stick to their guns, even when they have been spiked by opponents. Ghadially still believes joint surfaces are essentially smooth despite the careful work of Gardner detailed in the Heberden Oration of 1972.

It is a pleasure to report that Roger Dee has returned to writing about a fundamental first love—that of the innervation of joints—rather than a pragmatic approach to the design of elbow prostheses. The American air is obviously proving beneficial, or else the fear of law suits has re-directed his efforts. The biochemical chapters on the collagen of joints, the role of collagenase in joint destruction, and the microbiochemical studies of cartilage, and that on the immunobiology of joints, find the present reviewer unable to make comment, but he will certainly refer to them frequently.

David Swann's chapter on macromolecules of synovial fluid, written against the background of his own extensive studies over the past ten years, makes an ideal prelude to the final chapter on lubrication of joints. The best wine has been left until the end of the feast. You can almost hear Charles

McCutchen speaking in his riveting way as he writes. Here is a sample. 'Our ancestors knew how to make bearings work. They made the surfaces smooth, often of time-proven dissimilar pairs of materials, and they applied oil. To keep the oil from running away, they sometimes boiled it up with tallow and caustic solution to make grease, which is a weak solid and stays put. Oils and greases made things slippery: no one knew why'. As you are swept along by his flow of thought and writing, you could almost believe his views on weeping lubrication were proven.

This book is not for bedtime reading—unless you want a hypnotic. It is a fact-filled exposition of joint physiology. Every University Library should possess a copy to fulfil their commitments to science or medicine; every immunologist should regard it as compulsory reading to broaden their horizons beyond things that react in species far removed from man under conditions very foreign to real life situations; and every investigative rheumatologist should have it on his shelf, not only to impress his colleagues but as an invaluable reference work.

V. WRIGHT

Atlas of Medical Anatomy. By Jan Langman and M. W. Woerdeman. (Pp. x+523; illustrated. £17.50.) W. B. Saunders: Philadelphia, London, and Toronto. 1978.

Not only preclinical medical students will welcome the publication of this new atlas. Although primarily designed for such students it will help a wide variety of individuals because of its emphasis on relating factual topographical information with functional and practical applied considerations, and by virtue of a clear readable text that supplements the illustrations.

The atlas also correlates adult topography with that of the neonate, and with normal and abnormal development.

The main criticism of the book is that a number of illustrations are too small to be clear and sometimes the pointers are indistinct. The defects are probably due to the efforts of the authors to include

some 1000 illustrations on half as many pages, and still have room to supply a useful coherent text. Some correlation of topographical anatomy with computerized axial tomography would also be useful to those desirous of making basic morphology relevant to clinical practice. However, the authors and publishers are to be congratulated on producing a beautiful book that gives value for money.

This work is laid out conveniently in eight independent sections presented in regional order and facilitating its use for a variety of courses. Conceptual drawings, schemes, radiographs, and illustrations of surface anatomy will be of use particularly to those who do not have ready access to the full facilities of a medical school.

T. W. GLENISTER

The Recognition of Anti-Rheumatic Drugs. Edited by D. C. Dumonde and M. K. Jasani. (Pp. 383. £12.95.) MTP Press: Lancaster. 1978.

This book contains the proceedings of an international symposium held in April 1977, which brought together people from many disciplines concerned with inflammation, immune mechanisms, rheumatic diseases, and the discovery of drugs. A good way to get into the book is to begin with the last chapter, by John Vane, which skilfully and provocatively summarises the meeting. The papers cover a lot of ground. Much of the book reviews

present knowledge of inflammation, prostaglandins and other mediator substances, chemotaxis, activation of complement, hyperaemia and increased vascular permeability, immune complexes and tissue damage, and cell-mediated immunity. More and more experimental models for rheumatic diseases are being studied, and are contributing to our understanding. These can all be used to test drugs for relevant activity, but none of them have so far led to the discovery of a major new category among anti-rheumatic drugs, though some have been successfully used in the development of the newer aspirin-like drugs. A few of the papers are over-detailed and written in the traditional style of archival scientific journals, but most are readable. The last third of the book is on the clinical assessment of the severity of rheumatic disease, and the clinical evaluation of anti-rheumatic drugs. The discussion after each group of papers is printed in full; this evokes the flavour of the meeting and helps the reader to become involved. The book should help to widen the perception of all concerned with anti-rheumatic drugs, and deserves a place in every rheumatology department.

A. HERXHEIMER

Encyclopedia and Dictionary of Medicine, Nursing and Allied Health. By B. F. Miller and R. N. Keane. (Pp. xiii+1148; illustrated. £11.25 with index; £9.25 no index.)

A dictionary should be both informative and readable. It should deal with the rare and the commonplace and at its best should be the ideal book for the castaway on a desert island. Miller's and Keane's 'Encyclopedia and Dictionary' fulfils these requirements. The definitions are precise and succinct, the explanations clear and easily apprehended. The authors go to no much trouble to be accurate. An apparent mistake in the spelling of Ménière (acute accent or not) is discussed and proves to be an acceptable alternative.

The one qualification is that this is an American book and the British reader may find some of the entries unnecessary and others not in accordance with practice in this country. For example, ankylosing spondylitis comes under 'spondylitis' and is defined as a variety of rheumatoid arthritis, a view not held by most British Rheumatologists. 'Geriatrician' does not appear although 'geriatrics' and 'gerontologist' are present. There are other omissions. The common abbreviation 'HLA' does not appear in its expected place although it can be found under 'antigens' and the words for which it stands are not given.

Although the dictionary is intended primarily for nurses and ancillary workers, doctors will also find it useful for quick reference, when they encounter the unfamiliar in their efforts to keep up-to-date. All in all it is an excellent production and very good value for money.

A. L. WYME