Book review

Clinics in Rheumatic Diseases: Infectious Arthritis. Vol. 4. Edited by Frank R. Schmid. Pp. 245. £10.00. W. B. Saunders: Eastbourne. 1978.

In this volume infectious arthritis is treated from the dual perspective of the host and the micro-organism. The first part relates to the host's response to infection, so that the book opens with chapters on known defects which favour infection by micro-organisms and microbial phagocytic interactions. A valuable section on joint pathology, including information on the use of electron microscopy, follows. The next section is concerned with identification of the infecting agent. Methods currently employed for the isolation of micro-organisms and their sensitivity to antibiotics are discussed as well as the possibility of detecting antibodies by counter immunoelectrophoresis. In the chapter

on radiological diagnosis of infection, the use of radioisotopic scanning is discussed in detail. There follows the choice of antibiotics, their dosage and route of administration, as well as the physical approach to management, including surgical principles if joint function is to be preserved. Finally, there are chapters discussing clinical patterns produced by the main infecting micro-organisms.

The chapters which include discussion of gonococcal arthritis and staphylococcal infections are superb, while that on other Gram-negative coccal infections is extremely useful and includes up-to-date information on things like serratia arthritis in heroin addicts. The association of salmonella infection and sickle cell disease was not really adequately discussed, while the account of tuberculous arthritis was somewhat disappointing, because the changing pattern of tuberculosis now being seen in this country is not mentioned,

nor is the fact that tuberculosis in older patients in a joint already the site of degenerative or rheumatoid changes is occasionally seen. The chapter on viral arthritis is excellent, summing up present knowledge not only of old friends such as rubella arthropathy but also discussing the different types of viruses associated with arthritis, including the relatively widespread arboviruses as well as bringing us up to date on adenovirus infections. This would appear to be the first viral infection in which the infecting virus has been obtained from immune complexes in the joints of sufferers.

Despite the minor criticisms, this is the first good review of all facets of infectious arthritis and as such will be an extremely valuable book for rheumatologists. Dr Schmid is to be congratulated on getting together such a competent team of authors.

BARBARA ANSELL

Notes

Immunology conference

The 11th Congress of the European Academy of Allergology and Clinical Immunology will be held in Vienna on 6-10 October 1980. Further details from Dr H. Ludwig, c/o Wiener Medizinische Akademie, Alser Strasse 4, A-1090 Vienna, Austria.

Rheumatology update — 1979

A course entitled Rheumatology Update—1979 will be presented on 18-20 October, 1979 at the Hyatt Union Square Hotel in San Francisco, California. This course is designed to provide practising internists and rheumatologists with an update on current developments in the field of rheumatology. The course will concentrate on the clinical relevance of these new developments for the practising physician. This programme is presented by the University of California School of Medicine in San Francisco. Further information from Extended Programs in Medical Education, University of California, Room 569 U, San Francisco, California 94143, USA.