

**Common Vertebral Joint Problems.** By Gregory P. Grieve. Pp. 576. £32.00. Churchill Livingstone: Edinburgh. 1981.

Gregory Grieve is a physiotherapist who has developed a special interest and expertise in the treatment of spinal problems. This extensively referenced monograph represents a personal view based on the author's clinical experience and reading. The book is aimed at 'like minded professional colleagues' with an interest in spinal pain, but it is obvious that he has the physiotherapist uppermost in his mind.

The understanding and treatment of back pain is based on a thorough knowledge of anatomy, careful history taking, and a detailed examination aimed (it is hoped) at making a precise diagnosis. The opening chapters, therefore, are on anatomy, but the major part of the monograph consists of a detailed account of examination followed by practical descriptions of treatment techniques based largely but not exclusively on Maitland's methods of mobilisation. Subsequent chapters deal with nonmanual methods of treatment and prophylaxis.

This is not an easy book to read. The writing tends to be turgid and there are many lengthy verbatim quotations from other authors. The clinical chapters, however, are excellent. We would all benefit from incorporating some of his techniques of examination into our own clinical practice.

Unfortunately where the author discusses topics outside his personal clinical experience serious inaccuracies occur. The section on drug treatment is appalling. Drugs withdrawn many years ago are mentioned as 'new', generic and proprietary names are mixed, and many of the drug names are incorrectly spelt to such a degree that some are almost unrecognisable. It was surely unnecessary to include a section on the treatment of gout. With so many inaccuracies occurring in this section the reviewer began to doubt the accuracy of other sections where she had less specialised knowledge.

Mr Grieve has tried to do too much and has attempted to cover all possible aspects of the subject instead of confining his writing to his own experience. This book cannot, therefore, be recommended as it is, even though the clinical chapters deserve to be read.

ANNE NICHOLLS

**International Review of Connective Tissue Research.** Vol. 9. Eds. D. A. Hall and D. S. Jackson, Pp. 338. US\$49.00. Academic Press: New York 1981.

This series is aimed at the informed researcher who already has enough background to assimilate the material reviewed. For such readers volume 9 is excellent and thoroughly recommended. It is not pedagogic and is not a digest for clinicians.

*Wound healing* (S. Shoshan). The new information on wound healing is discussed in this chapter, and the questions that need investigation are pointed out.

*Biosynthesis of proteoglycans: an approach to locate it in different membrane systems* (T. O. Kleine). This comprehensive review draws together a wide and disparate literature, and is an excellent text for reference.

*Chromosome mapping of connective tissue protein genes* (R. L. Church). The techniques used in chromosome mapping and their application to genetics of connective tissue proteins are fully discussed. The emphasis is on 'gene mapping' rather than on the molecular biology of DNA.

*Collagenolytic enzymes and their naturally occurring inhibitors* (A. Sellers and G. Murphy). The mechanisms whereby different enzymes can contribute to normal and pathological collagen lysis are discussed. This chapter is particularly useful and clear in an area where there have been conflicting results.

*Molecular organisation of basement membranes* (J. G. Heathcote and M. E. Grant). This chapter is an excellent account of morphology and biochemistry, and includes all the other constituents of basement membranes besides collagen.

*Localisation of collagen types in tissues* (K. von der Mark). Most tissues and organs are included, and methods to prepare pure collagens of each type for immunisation are described. The immunohistochemistry is beautifully illustrated.

HELEN MUIR

**An Introduction to the Biomechanics of Joints and Joint Replacement.** Eds. D. Dowson and V. Wright. Pp. 254. £44.00. Mechanical Engineering Publications: Bury St. Edmunds, Suffolk. 1981.

This book finds its origins in the Bioengineering Group for the Study of Human Joints established in the University of Leeds in 1966 and represents the published text of an annual series of lectures given in Leeds for the past 7 years. As the Editors state, it is 'an introduction to the subject of synovial joints and joint replacement,' and not, as the blurb claims, 'a unique and comprehensive collection of information.'

Each of 23 authors, whose interests range from rheumatology and zoology to tribology and mechanical engineering, has been encouraged by the editors to give a personal view of a particular aspect of joint anatomy, mechanics, joint forces, material properties, and other topics relevant to the background of present approaches to total surgical replacement of the hip, knee, shoulder, elbow, and finger. To a substantial extent the editors have succeeded in their aims. I have found much of interest in this volume, and the rheumatologist will fare likewise. It is a valuable supplement to conventional textbooks of rheumatology.

The criticisms that can be levied appear to arise from a liberal editorial policy. Thus, although there is a valuable index of both authors and subjects, the references appended to each chapter range from none (chapter 3) to more than 80 (chapter 13). Is the lubrication of joints so much more important than the molecular properties of articular cartilage? Less happily, I was disconcerted to find that of the 82