

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 Drugs withdrawn many years ago are mentioned as 'new', generic and proprietary names are mixed, and many of the drug names are incorrectly spelt to such a degree that some are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

references to the first 6 chapters only 10 are more recent than 1972. Throughout the book, in fact, there has been no real attempt to provide an up-to-date summary of modern literature. In making this gloomy comment, I was, perhaps, influenced by my discovery that *Gray's Anatomy* had been wrongly quoted, in an obsolete edition, on p. 5.

In a book where so much engineering theory rests upon anatomical understanding greater attention should have been given to the accuracy and value of the many line diagrams. The human skeleton (p. 2) is a skimpy affair of whom 'man's designer' (editors' introduction) might have been ashamed. The bones of the hand (p. 98) are carefully labelled, those of the foot (p. 82) are not. The interphalangeal joint (p. 99) is difficult to comprehend. Similar inconsistencies within chapters relate to the labelling of figures, so that whereas (Fig. 17.7) some structures can be

placed in perspective, many others, such as Fig. 17.5, have no scale indicated.

Deliberately, the Leeds viewpoint is presented. The reader may be saddened that the biochemical work of Muir and her colleagues is not mentioned in the discussion of the chemistry of cartilage, just as the surgical experiments of Freeman and Swanson are not indexed in the chapter on total knee replacement.

Notwithstanding these criticisms the book fulfils its principal purpose. I trust it will proceed to a further edition in which more account can be taken of contemporary research. In the meantime it is a monument to the signal and pioneering efforts of the Leeds group to advance knowledge of this important subject with its attendant clinical problems.

D. L. GARDNER

Notes

Coming events

22–27 August. XVI International Congress of Internal Medicine: Prague, Czechoslovakia.

3–5 September. International Skeletal Society—refresher course on bone and joint disease: San Francisco, California, USA.

11 September. 'Joint management': a symposium for rheumatologists and orthopaedic surgeons: London.

23–24 September. Joint Annual Provincial Meeting: the Heberden Society/BARR/Royal Society of Medicine (Section of Rheumatology and Rehabilitation)/Irish Society of Rheumatology: Cambridge.

4–7 October. V Latin Congress of Rheumatology: Florence, Italy.

15 October. ARC Symposium 'The consultant's role in rheumatological education of GPs' (by invitation only): Charing Cross Hospital Medical School, London.

11–12 November. The Heberden Society—Annual Meeting and Oration: Queen Elizabeth Hall, South Bank, London.

26 June–1 July 1983. X European Congress of Rheumatology: Moscow, USSR.

A complete list of rheumatological meetings and courses in the UK is published in January and July of each year in the *BLAR Newsletter*, a copy of which is available from the Arthritis and Rheumatism Council, 41 Eagle Street, London WC1R 4AR.

British Connective Tissue Society

The British Connective Tissue Society was recently formed by the amalgamation of the former Collagen Club

and Mucopolysaccharide Club. The new society aims to assist the scientific study of connective tissues and to provide a forum for research in this country. It is a registered charity and a member of the Biological Council. The society organises 2 meetings each year, and the next will be at the University of Southampton on 23–24 September 1982. The theme of this meeting will be 'Biological function and physical properties of connective tissues.' In addition to main sessions there will also be free communications and poster presentations. A future meeting on 'Cell-matrix interactions' is also planned for 21–22 April 1983 at St George's Hospital Medical School, London. Membership of the Society is £5 p.a. Further details may be obtained from the Secretary, Dr T. E. Hardingham, Kennedy Institute of Rheumatology, Bute Gardens, London W6 7DW (tel. 01-748 9966).

Meeting in honour of Professor Eric Bywaters

An afternoon clinical meeting is planned for 10 November 1982 in the Rheumatology Unit, Royal Postgraduate Medical School, Hammersmith Hospital, London, in honour of Professor E. G. L. Bywaters. As the meeting is to be held on the day before the annual meeting of the Heberden Society, it is hoped that a number of visiting overseas colleagues might be able to attend. All those who have at any time worked for Professor Bywaters are welcome to attend and are asked to write to Dr Graham R. V. Hughes, Hammersmith Hospital, Du Cane Road, London W12 0HS.