

bone which precede radiological changes. Of special interest is the chapter on the arthritides, including the use of isotopes to detect synovitis at an early stage, as well as in screening patients with a suspected polyarthropathy. The chapters on metabolic bone disease, avascular necrosis, developmental abnormalities, and fractures will also prove of interest.

A well-balanced clinical approach has been adopted, in which the indications and the limitations for this technique in individual circumstances are discussed.

In this well-illustrated book the authors rightly emphasise the unparalleled sensitivity of isotope bone imaging in detecting bone and joint disorders at an early stage, rather than in discriminating between specific disorders. This book would be a worthwhile acquisition for any rheumatology department with access to, or interest in, radioisotope techniques.

N W GARVIE

Rheumatoid Arthritis: The Treatment Controversy. Eds. D Goddard and R Butler. Pp. 162. £27.00. Macmillan: London. 1984.

This book presents the proceedings of a two-day symposium held in March 1984. Senior registrars and a panel of professors and consultants in rheumatology addressed themselves to past, present, and future problems relating to 'second-line' antirheumatic therapy. Detailed and critical reviews of the literature relating to gold, D-penicillamine, corticosteroids, and immunosuppressive agents were provided by individual contributors. These

chapters are bracketed by an introduction on the need for disease modifying drugs and a section on cost-benefit analysis. The final chapter provides a summary of the proceedings. While some may question the list because of its exclusions, the diversity of opinions expressed on these more 'established' preparations suggests that the editors were wise in retaining a select group of therapeutic agents. The chapters are extensively, if somewhat idiosyncratically referenced, and provide a valuable current appraisal of the efficacy and toxicity of these preparations. The inclusion of a chapter on corticosteroids is of interest and points out the discrepancies in our perceived and actual use of these drugs.

After the definitive chapters the ensuing audience discussion is reported verbatim and in total accounts for 50 pages. While this is eminently readable, its scientific value is questionable. Inevitably opinions, often strongly expressed, abound supported more by anecdote than fact. Therapeutic hawks and doves circle and swoop. The discussion sections do offer some insight into the general thinking relating to second-line agents. However, the problems of diagnosis, disease heterogeneity, the optimum time to commence therapy, the periodicity and duration of treatment, and the relevant parameters to measure remain unanswered. The general tenor of discussion was against further large multicentre trials employing placebo controls. Numerous 'interesting' future studies were proposed. Whether these will dramatically influence the usage of currently available second-line agents remains to be seen.

Despite caveats, this book is a useful addition to a departmental library because of its detailed re-evaluation of drugs in everyday rheumatological use.

I D GRIFFITHS

Notes

Pain in the community: a clinical approach

The 8th Annual Scientific Meeting of the Australian Pain Society will be held in Melbourne on 5-8 February 1986 to discuss the topic 'Pain in the community'. Further information from Dr Terence F Little, Pain Management Centre, Royal Southern Memorial Hospital, 260 Kooyong Road, Caulfield 3162, Victoria, Australia.

Ballabio and Gigante awards for European studies in rheumatology

To honour the memory of Professor C B Ballabio and D

Gigante, honorary Presidents of the Italian Society of Rheumatology (SIR) and of the Italian League against Rheumatic Diseases (LIMAR) for 1985, the SIR has announced two study awards of 5 000 000 lire each, one dedicated to Prof C B Ballabio, for scientific research work, and the other dedicated to Prof D Gigante, founder of LIMAR, for work connected with the epidemiological and social aspects of rheumatic diseases. Candidates must be under 50 years of age on the closing date, 30 September 1985. Application should be made to Prof Umberto Ambanelli, Secretary General of SIR (Via Carducci, 30-43100 Parma) and documentary evidence of the candidate's activity in the scientific and epidemiological social fields should be provided. A maximum of five papers should be enclosed with the application (in Italian, French, English, Spanish, or German; and summary in French or English) illustrating the work of the candidate. The awards will be presented in Italy in 1985 or 1986.