is much more comprehensive. There follow brief reviews
of events in inflammation and the likely mechanism of
action of anti-inflammatory compounds together with a
description of their biochemical effects and of standard
assays for anti-inflammatory activity. Almost one third of
the book is then devoted to a detailed description not only
of the structure of each of the standard anti-inflammatory
agents but also of the chemical processes by which they are
synthesised. A brief chapter reviews recent trends in
formulation, including carrier systems, the osmotic pump,
and transdermal drug delivery. The final chapters deal with
the metabolism of anti-inflammatory agents and the side
effects that result from their use.

The reviews are comprehensive and well referenced up
to the end of 1984. The book is felt by the editor to provide
a useful introduction to the subject, though it is likely to be
more widely read by industrial scientists, particularly
chemists, than by clinicians.

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Computers in Rheumatology. ARC Conference
Proceedings. No 1. Pp. 111. £5.00. Arthritis and

This is a report of a two day 'state of the art' conference
held at The London Hospital in June 1986 and is the first in
a series of forthcoming 'ARC reports'. The early part of
the proceedings consist largely of individual reports on the
computerisation of clinical projects of varying complexity.
Many of the systems were later on display and, under-
standably, the reports do not fully reflect the vitality of the
first day. One message comes across loud and clear,
however: computerisation does not save time and effort,
but its successful rise is rewarded by increased accuracy
and efficiency.

The last, and more readily digestible, part is devoted to
reports of the chairman of workshops charged with
investigating the potential of computers in certain aspects
of rheumatology, such as a diagnostic index, medical audit,
research, and medical records, including word processing.
The workshops draw upon the expertise of systems
designers, statisticians, and epidemiologists and produce
useful guidelines. The need for clear objectives is stressed,
the problems of software unsuitability and incompatibility
discussed and contrasted with the relatively less severe
difficulties of hardware choice, and potential sources of
help and advice indicated. Reading this section it becomes
clear how closely the various applications inter-relate.
A diagnostic index, for example, can generate material for
clinical management, for audit, and for research. In the
field of audit alone the first skirmishes have taken place,
and the prospect of a computer war between the district
mainframe and the departmental micro is chilling, to say
the least.

The proceedings are well summarised and, in a bewildering
and rapidly changing field, point the way to future
developments. The involvement of the BSR, through its
computer subcommittee, is encouraging.

(This review written on 'Easyscript' in a Commodore 64
linked to an Epson RX 80 printer in 'enhanced mode' via a
Micro Peripherals tripler—all expletives deleted.)

Consultant Rheumatologist,
Edgeware General Hospital

Notes

Hellenic Society for
Rheumatology

The XIIth Panhellenic Congress of Rheumatology with
International Participation will take place in Athens on 1–3
December 1988. The topics will be 'Autoantibodies in
rheumatic diseases' and 'Immunomodulation in the treat-
ment of rheumatic diseases'. Further information from Dr
D Karras, 50 Kallidromiou Street, 114 73 Athens, Greece.

IVth Mediterranean congress of
rheumatology

The congress will be held in Istanbul, Turkey on 2–3 June
1988. Topics will include juvenile chronic arthritis, familial
Mediterranean fever, and amyloidosis associated with
rheumatic diseases. Details from Professor Nihat Dilsen,
President of the Congress, VIP Tourism Pirinccioglu Inc,
Cumhuriyet Cad 269/2 Harbiye, Istanbul, Turkey.

XVII Congress of the Spanish
Society of Rheumatology

This Congress will be held in Barcelona from 18 to 21 May
1988. Further information from Dr P. Barceló, Garcia,
Hospital Malalties Reumàtiques, Passeig de Josep Carner,
31, 08004 Barcelona.

Back pain: current concepts and
recent advances

The 2nd European Congress on this topic will be held in
Montreux, Switzerland on 4–6 May 1988. Further information
from the Congress Secretariat, 30 Deane Way, Ruislip,
Middlesex HA4 8SX, England.

1st Mediterranean symposium on
Behçet's disease

This symposium will be held in Istanbul, Turkey on 4
June 1988. Details from Professor Nihat Dilsen,
President of the Congress, VIP Tourism Pirinccioglu Inc,
Cumhuriyet Cad 269/2 Harbiye, Istanbul, Turkey.