Book reviews

Musculoskeletal Pain: Diagnosis and Physical Treatment. 2nd Edn. By D A Zohn. Pp 261. £29.95. Churchill Livingstone: Edinburgh. 1987. ISBN 0-31-98897-9.

Most conventional rheumatologists (even those of us who use manipulative treatment) will find it difficult to accept that tenderness just medial to the posterior superior iliac spine is a sign of sacroiliac joint pathology. Equally, muscular tears of sacrospinalis, diagnosed by palpation just superior to that spine, are not common in my experience (pp 79-80). There are several other suggested diagnostic points which most of your readers would find unacceptable.

Naffziger's test (bilateral jugular vein compression increasing the intradural pressure, and so the back or leg pain) to confirm a doubtful Lasègue sign was new to me, however. This may be of help, particularly in medicolegal cases. I have yet to test the trick of getting the patient to swing the leg on the side of apparent long leg, to abolish muscle spasm. The importance of leg length discrepancy is in any case disputed. I cannot recommend this book for the uninitiated, but it gives some help in understanding the terminology used by some manipulators, and some useful tips in what may be a difficult therapeutic field.

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New Perspectives in Anti-Inflammatory Therapies. Advances in Inflammation Research. Vol. 12. Eds. Alan Lewis, Neil Ackerman, Ivan Otterness. Pp. 352. US\$ 117.50. Raven Press: New York. 1988. ISBN 88167-362-5.

The Inflammation Research Association comprises academic and industrial scientists largely from the United States of America whose primary goal is the design and discovery of new and improved treatments for inflammatory diseases. This multi-authored book records the proceedings of their third international conference held in Pennsylvania in October 1986.

After an introductory chapter by Morris Ziff on the emigration of lymphocytes in rheumatoid synovitis the volume divides into three sections. The first reviews the place of cytokines and degradative enzymes in inflammation, the second deals with lipid mediators, while the final section addresses the more general topic of evaluation of novel antirheumatic drugs. Finally, 10 pages are devoted to workshop reviews.

There are over 77 contributors to this small volume, most from the USA, and inevitably this leads to some background repetition, but the overall standard of presentations is surprisingly high. Although the final section is probably of most interest to the clinical rheumatologist, with excellent reviews on cyclosporin and its receptor cyclophilin and an interesting chapter on selenium and inflammation, immunologists and pharmacologists alike

will find much to interest them. I particularly enjoyed the chapters on the role of arachidonic acid metabolites in psoriasis, inflammatory bowel disease, and myocardial ischaemia. The quality of illustrations throughout is high and most chapters are well referenced up until 1986.

Like most volumes in this series this is not a book to be read from cover to cover and as it deals with such a rapidly changing field most individuals would probably feel the purchase price of about £70 unjustifiable. Perhaps the money would be better spent by attending the next international meeting of the association!

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S RUDGE

Behçet's Disease: A Contemporary Synopsis. Eds. G R Plotkin, J J Calabro, J D O'Duffy. Pp 304. US\$ 62.00. Futura: New York. 1988. ISBN 0-87993-313-5.

As the title indicates this book is a short synopsis of the current knowledge of Behçet's disease. Thus the ground covered includes a historical report of the interest in this syndrome which has developed in recent years and accounts of the difficulties in diagnosis. It is confusing that different schemes of diagnosis appear in chapters on 'Diagnostic criteria' and 'Musculoskeletal manifestations'. Epidemiology, immunological disturbances, pathogenesis and pathology, and the wide spectrum of clinical manifestations are also described.

Previous books on this subject have been published in Europe, Japan, North Africa, and Turkey, and this present volume, therefore, aims to attract and educate our North American colleagues. It is always too easy to be critical, but one is disappointed to find that the list of authors does not include many who have personal experience of diagnosing and treating this syndrome as it is rare in North America and Western Europe.

From a rheumatological point of view the authors separate the arthritis of Behçet's syndrome from the seronegative arthropathies and classify the disease among the vasculitides. Almost all workers would agree with this, but it is unfortunate that it is stated that 'in England it is included as a member of the seronegative spondyloarthropathies', which has not been the case for some years.

The chapter on treatment and prognosis is short (seven pages) and, although this may represent our lack of knowledge, one may suggest that current accounts of prognosis and treatment are somewhat more extensive than are reviewed.

It is hoped that this will stimulate further interest in the subject in North America where the next international symposium on Behçet's disease will be held in 1989.

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