Notes and news

Grant for osteoporosis research

The National Osteoporosis Society has helped to obtain the funding for a major grant for osteoporosis research of £46 000 into an important project on hormone replacement therapy and its significance to osteoporosis. The award has been made to Mr John Studd at the menopause research unit in Dulwich Hospital, London, and the project will occur over two years. The two national charities who have made the grant are Remedi (director—Col Patrick Mesquita) and Birthright (director—Mr Andrew Ross).

French congress of rheumatology

The third French congress of rheumatology will be held in Paris from the 22 to the 24 November 1990, at the Cite des Sciences et de l'Industrie de la Villette.

On the first morning there will be a plenary session on patellofemoral osteoarthritis and in the afternoon parallel sessions on bone and calcium metabolism, pharmacology and therapeutics, and medical social aspects. On the second morning there will be a combined meeting with the British Society for Rheumatology, followed in the afternoon by parallel sessions on immunology of inflammatory arthritis, epidemiology, and free subjects. A plenary session on multiple myeloma will be held on the third morning.

For further information please contact Secretariat de la Société Française de Rhumatologie, Centre Hospitalier et Universitaire, Service de Rhumatologie, 59037 Lille Cedex, France.

Volvo awards for low back pain research 1991

To encourage research in low back pain the Volvo Company of Göteborg, Sweden, has again this year sponsored three prizes of US \$9000 each. Awards will be made competitively on the basis of scientific merit in one or more of the following three areas: (a) clinical studies; (b) bioengineering studies; (c) studies in other basic science areas.

Papers submitted for the contest must contain original material, not previously published or submitted for publication. Multiple authorship is acceptable. The manuscripts should be in the form of a complete report, including original illustrations, not exceeding 30 typewritten pages, double spaced, and in a form suitable for submission to a scientific journal. One original and five copies of each paper submitted in full should reach the address given below not later than 30 November 1990.

One of the authors should be prepared, at his own expense, to come to Heidelberg, West Germany, at the time of the

meeting of the International Society for the Study of the Lumbar Spine, 13-16 May 1991, to present the paper and to receive the award.

The board of referees will be chaired by Professor Alf Nachemson and will contain members from the fields of clinical medicine, bioengineering, and biochemistry.

Please direct all correspondence to Professor Alf Nachemson, Department of Orthopaedics, Sahlgren Hospital, S-413 45 Göteborg, Sweden.

Calendar of events

In 1990

- 24-25 May International workshop on cartilage
Contact: Rannveig Rischmann, Oslo Sanitetsforening Rheumatism Hospital, Akersbakken 27, N-0172 Oslo 1, Norway. Tel 47-2-208830 or Thonny Meltzer at the same address and number
- 17-22 June VIth International Rehabilitation Medicine Association Congress. XIVth National congress of the Spanish Rehabilitation Society
Contact: IRMA VI-MADRID 90, PO Box 61274, 28080 Madrid, Spain. Tel 455 10 88
- 20-22 June Annual Bristol course—The problem knee
Contact: Professor L Solomon, Department of Orthopaedic Surgery, Bristol Royal Infirmary, Bristol BS2 8HW
- 28-30 Aug The Edinburgh festival of rheumatology and science. BSR advanced course in rheumatology.
Contact: Professor G Nuki, Rheumatic Diseases Unit, Northern General Hospital, Ferry Road, Edinburgh, Scotland. Tel 031-332-2525
- 6-7 Sep BSR paediatric course
Contact: Dr A Clarke, Royal National Hospital for Rheumatic Diseases, Upper Borough Walls, Bath
- 25-28 Sep BSR 7th annual general meeting, Imperial College, London
- 12 Oct BSR basic rheumatology course
Contact: Dr B Hazleman, Addenbrooke's Hospital, Hills Road, Cambridge CB2 2QQ. Tel 0223 245151
- 15-16 Oct BSR rehabilitation course
Contact: Dr A O Frank, Northwick Park Hospital, Watford Road, Harrow, Middlesex HA1 3UJ

Book reviews

The Making of Rehabilitation: A Political Economy of Medical Specialization, 1890-1980. Glenn Gritzer, Arnold Arluke. (Pp xxiii+214; £27.50 hardback, £9.95 paperback.) California: University of California Press, 1985. ISBN 0-520-05302-8 (hardback), 0-520-06604-9 (paperback).

Gritzer and Arluke's sociological history of American rehabilitation medicine first appeared in 1985 in hardback. Its recent reappearance in paperback provides an opportunity to bring it to the attention of British readers interested in the field. It may

at first seem an off-putting book to a non-sociological reader, for it begins not with the early days of rehabilitation, but with a sociological discourse on models of specialisation. First and foremost Gritzer and Arluke see history as a convenient means of testing sociological models of the growing complexity of modern societies, of the ways in which groups (in medicine or wherever) increasingly specialise. For them, most writing on specialisation has suggested that it is a natural and inevitable consequence of scientific progress—the 'natural' model of growth. They wish to substitute for this model one that

emphasises human action and the ways in which science and technology are used as resources by groups, such as rehabilitationists, to organise the market for their skills—the 'market' model. It is important to note the different importance that the two models accord science and technology in historical change. On the one hand, the 'natural' model emphasises their centrality to historical change. On the other, the 'market' model suggests that science and technology may be social products. As you might guess, Gritzer and Arluke are not interested in the nuts and bolts of the practice of rehabilitation medicine. Instead they seek to show how psychiatrists and their forerunners have carved out a niche for themselves in American medicine.

After the first chapter Gritzer and Arluke go on to produce a readable history of American rehabilitation medicine. It begins in the late 19th century and traces the political struggles of psychiatrists and physical therapists and their predecessors through to the 1980s. Psychiatry's 19th century roots, they suggest, are in electrotherapy, and the book traces the emergence of a collective specialist identity among electrotherapists. Subsequently, the book examines the effect of World War I demands for the rehabilitation of wounded soldiers on the development of the specialty. Later chapters trace conflicts between physical and occupational therapy, and the ways in which psychiatry gained official specialty status during World War II, imposing its control over lay physical therapists. Thus by mid-century, Gritzer and Arluke suggest a medically controlled division of labour had developed, with relationships and tasks defined by formal agreements and licensing laws. Subsequently, they examine the ways in which psychiatry has attempted to maintain its position at the top of the division of labour in rehabilitation medicine.

Within the limitations of this type of history Gritzer and Arluke have produced an account that far exceeds anything that has been written to date on the subject, either in the United States or elsewhere, and it should serve as the standard account for some time to come. But note the words 'roots' and 'development'. These are Gritzer and Arluke's own, and they point to a major difficulty in their attempts to distance themselves from a natural growth model. By writing of the 'roots' of rehabilitation medicine, or of its 'development' Gritzer and Arluke reintroduce the very natural, biological metaphors or models of growth from which they wish to distance themselves.

Wellcome Unit for the History of Medicine,
Mathematics Tower,
The University,
Manchester M13 9PL

DAVID CANTOR

Positive Health Guides: Avoiding Osteoporosis. A Dixon, A Woolf. (Pp 151; £5.99.) London: Macdonald, 1989. ISBN 0-356-15445-9.

Rheumatologists no longer limit their attention to the joints and increasingly realise the complexity, importance, and attraction of the diseases which affect the bones between them. This book by Dixon and Woolf, both rheumatologists, on a common skeletal disease, is a clear example of this change. It is simple, straightforward, and useful. It is uncluttered with controversial metabolism, and is ideal for present and potential sufferers from osteoporosis, for whom it is intended.

Osteoporosis is not a new disease. What is new is the fuss made about it. With the aging population many more people (especially women) will live long enough to fracture. To an elderly woman fracture of the femoral neck is a catastrophe; it may be fatal, it certainly shortens life, and it will disable. On an economic basis such fractures cost millions of pounds a year. Current opinion states that these fractures are largely due to osteoporosis. If this is only partly true, prevention and treatment of osteoporosis are astonishingly important and are sufficient justification for this book.

Within 150 pages (and for £5.99) the authors define osteoporosis and its causes, consider who is at risk, and outline strategies for prevention and treatment. They give practical

advice; and they devote 10 pages to sufferers' questions and answers. Within the limits of description and space which the authors have presumably set themselves I found a lot to commend and little to criticise. My main problem came on the opening page where there is the statement that 'this increased fragility of bone is what is meant by osteoporosis'. Such an offering might well throw the simple reader into confusion. Osteoporosis is exactly what it says and that is porosis of the bones. It is only one cause of bone fragility. Indeed a major problem facing those people trying to relate osteoporosis to fractures is that there is not a close association between them. This is because the fragility of bones is not solely determined by the reduction in its amount but also by changes in its composition, architecture, and by many other factors, known and unknown. Excluding this opening statement the book is non-controversial (so far as this is possible in such an emotive field) and may in my opinion be enthusiastically recommended to patients and non-patients alike, who will appreciate and benefit from its advice. The medical reader should note that this is not the only book on osteoporosis written by these authors and would be well advised to spend his or her valuable time on a more detailed discussion of the problems of osteoporosis.

Nuffield Orthopaedic Centre,
Oxford OX3 7LD

ROGER SMITH

Common Vertebral Joint Problems. 2nd ed. Gregory P Grieve. (Pp 804; £65.) Edinburgh: Churchill Livingstone, 1988. ISBN 0-443-03365-X.

This volume has the cachet of a magnum opus. Although superficially similar in appearance, it is unrelated to a large multicontributor volume—*Modern Manual Therapy*—edited by the same author.

At 2.5 kg it is a heavyweight, comprising about 800 pages of double column text and 2505 references, it is strongly bound, and authoritatively presented. The author is a physiotherapist with an international reputation for teaching about the spine. The text evidently encapsulates a lifetime of practice and teaching. Does the book live up to expectations?

A principle declared in the preface is that therapists should be acquainted with all aspects of science related to their own fields of expertise. This sets out the motivation for producing detailed sections on anatomy, aetiology, pathology, clinical features, and investigations. Physiotherapy techniques of examination and treatment are covered in detail. Techniques adopted by doctors, surgeons, and those in fringe medicine are by no means neglected. I found myself lost in admiration at sections describing the anatomy of vertebral joints, the circulation of the spinal cord, and pathology, to list but a few. These are all topics of fundamental importance but are often neglected in teaching. I am sure physiotherapists will feel the same about the detailed sections on examination and treatment.

While I have had the book I have repeatedly done spot checks to see if my current queries were answered—or to discover loopholes. Nothing was found lacking. This checking led, however, to a bone of contention—the index. This failed to list nearly everything in which I, as a rheumatologist, was interested. For example, rheumatoid arthritis, chemonucleolysis, magnetic resonance imaging: none is indexed, though all are covered in the text. True, one could find the section by referring to the contents and then flicking through the subheadings, but a better index would be a boon.

The reference list is huge and helpful, but I could not help noticing a few inaccuracies (especially as one related to a publication of my own). Another is the failure to differentiate the two volumes of the Cyriax *Textbook of Orthopaedic Medicine*.

For physiotherapists interested in the spine this is a veritable vade-mecum. For similarly interested rheumatologists it is an important book to which one should have access.

Department of Rheumatology,
St Thomas's Hospital,
London SE1 7EH

J A MATHEWS