Book reviews

Connective Tissue Diseases in the Skin. New York: Marcel Dekker, 1993. Eds C Lapiere, T Krieg. (Pp 408; \$150.00.) ISBN 0 8247 9133 9.

Connective Tissue Diseases in the Skin is the latest in the excellent *Clinical Dermatology Series*. The guest editors, both distinguished in this field, have chosen an international group of expert authors. The result is a compact covering up to date reviews of connective tissue biology and selected disorders of connective tissue, both genetic and acquired. It is obviously slanted towards dermatologists and those particularly interested in the skin but the contents are relevant to all those interested in connective tissue.

The first half of the book deals with the structure and function of connective tissue components and relevant cell biology. The individual chapter topics are well selected and the authors have achieved overviews of what are rapidly developing areas of study which are at the same time very scholarly and comprehensible to those of us not expert in this field. I suspect that the editors' 'hand' has been firmly applied and there is a uniformity of style which is helpful and the text is supplemented by some excellent line drawings and up to date references.

The second half covers a range of clinical disorders of connective tissue including the effects of ageing, the genetically determined disorders of connective tissue, acquired disorders including the bullous diseases and scleroderma, and the effect of drugs. The chapters are succinct clinical reviews with topical accounts of current thoughts on pathogenesis. As a rheumatologist I found it valuable to have these clinical topics collected together in one volume. Although the preface suggests that the book could be used as a guide for "solving" clinical problems, this is not the strongest aspect especially from the point of view of rheumatologists. In this part of the book the contributions are rather more varied in quality and I found the chapter on scleroderma, in particular, rather stale.

Like other members of the series, this is a well produced book in a handy size with a sturdy binding. Overall, it is easy to read although the English translation in the occasional chapter is rather stilted. There are good up to date references. The black and white clinical illustrations are usually adequate but many suffer from not being in colour. I think that the proposed price of \$150 is extremely expensive but it is still worth considering by rheumatologists especially those interested in dermatological aspects of the speciality and in connective tissue biology.

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Arthritis and Related Affections. A Soren. (Pp 448; £113.00.) Berlin: Springer-Verlag 1993. ISBN 354055 7792.

This fascinating single author text is of the greatest interest to pathologists working in the field of osteoarticular disease. The book represents a distillation of Dr Soren's very long experience first in Vienna, then more recently at New York University Medical Centre, where he is Professor of Orthopaedic Surgery. Because of this background, the text is unique in bringing together perspectives in orthopaedic surgical diagnosis and treatment from two continents and in relating these to the present understanding of the clinical and pathological diagnosis and differential diagnosis of the whole spectrum of articular disease as seen in one of the world's leading centres. The book is also distinguished from the majority of current multi-author works in orthopaedic surgery and osteoarticular pathology firstly, because it is an account of the lifetime's experience of a single expert; secondly,

because the literature quoted (1825 references are accurately cited) takes proper account of the great contributions made to the subject in the earlier years of this century studies often overlooked in modern works.

The book begins with a brief consideration of the anatomy and physiology of joints. It does not attempt to survey contemporary views on connective tissue biochemistry, immunology or biomechanics but moves quickly to an extensive interpretation of many of the practical problems in the examination of a patient with joint disease, properly discussing topics ranging from urinalysis and the auscultation of joints to synovial fluid studies and synovial biopsy.

Thereafter, the work is in ten parts that encompass trauma, infection, hypersensitivity, degenerative disease, the joints in systemic disease, metabolic, endocrine and neuropathic abnormalities, tumours of joints and many miscellaneous conditions. Each part considers in turn the nature, clinical and radiological diagnosis, pathological anatomy, histopathology and treatment of the entire range of articular disorders. The contents are of particular value to the practising osteoarticular histopathologist because of the considerable attention given to the clinical diagnosis, anatomical and histological changes and histopathology of disorders such as, sprains, joint instability, contracture and ankylosis, that are frequently omitted from conventional texts. On the other hand, the diagnostician whose practice centres on techniques such as immunocytochemistry and *in situ* hybridisation will be disappointed and not all pathologists will be familiar with the accounts of joint neoplasms favoured by the author.

The book is liberally illustrated with black and white photographs; many are clinical and radiological. Pathological anatomy is also extensively depicted and there are numerous light photomicrographs although only a few electron micrographs. For those readers familiar with Dr Soren's earlier and equally unusual monograph on *Histodiagnosis and Clinical Correlation of Rheumatoid and Other Synovitis*, this remarkable work is a cause for intense congratulation. All those working in the practical field of osteoarticular diagnosis should be familiar with it and orthopaedic surgeons and rheumatologists will be wise not to neglect the sense that has come from the author's lifetime of experience in their specialities.

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Arthritis Surgery. C B Sledge, *et al.* New York: W B Saunders, 1994. (Pp 959; £85.) ISBN 0 7216 4912 2.

Clem Sledge and his American co-authors were concerned that patients undergoing surgery for arthritis in the United States were unlikely to be treated by surgeons who had a specific interest in that area, and in particular, did not fully understand the general effects of arthritis and its treatment. This view surprised me, but they went on to explain that this situation was due to the very compartmentalised nature of their healthcare system, and the resultant high quality care of generalised manifestations by rheumatologists and internists, with the surgeon acting in a predominantly technical role. Needless to say, this struck a somewhat discordant note in a surgeon working in the British healthcare system, one that is besotted with the management jargon of throughput and targets, and has to ignore the more difficult parameter of the surgeon's role as a caring doctor. This book was designed to fill the gap between the North American dichotomy of specialisation in surgical technique rather than disease groupings, between general orthopaedic training and the *Textbook of Rheumatology*. In fact, the book is composed of