

Volume I

CLINICAL IMMUNOLOGY

Edited by

CHARLES W. PARKER, M.D.

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CLINICAL

Volume I

IMMUNOLOGY

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PREFACE

Approximately a decade has elapsed between the first discussions I had with John Dusseau, then Managing Editor of W. B. Saunders, regarding a textbook of clinical immunology and its ultimate realization. At the time of our first discussion it seemed to me that the field was moving so rapidly and there were so many unanswered questions that any attempt to construct a reasonably definitive textbook might be premature. John, who has since retired but maintains an active interest in the Company and its publications, fully understood what I was trying to say and seemed quite willing to bide his time. Even now there are many unanswered questions and new work is coming out in such quantities that any attempt to collate the available information is not only difficult but subject to potential controversy. In 1971, Robison, Butcher and Sutherland, in the preface to the book *Cyclic AMP*, compared the cyclic AMP field to an imaginary child being photographed, who during the course of the photographic session grew to adult proportions and left the studio badly in need of a shave. This analogy is equally applicable to the field of immunology, which now has more than 20 basic and clinical journals and has become one of the two or three most rapidly moving investigational fields in the entire area of biologic science. Nonetheless, the field of immunology has now arrived at a point where a great deal is known and a considerable amount of what will emerge in the next 10 to 15 years will be more in the form of elaboration than the development of entirely new concepts. While the imaginary immunologic child will no doubt continue to change in appearance as he ages, he should be easily recognizable from his earlier pictures. At least at this point in time we have considerable justification for considering autoimmune diseases, such as systemic lupus erythematosus, as immunoregulatory defects, and certainly the IgE-mediated diseases are much better understood in terms of their mechanism than they were 15 years ago before the discovery of IgE as a unique immunoglobulin.

A major attempt has been made in the construction of this book to concentrate on known information and to avoid major areas of controversy other than to point out that they exist. There also has been an attempt to provide information that is as current as possible. The book is divided into two major sections: basic and clinical. There is significant overlap between the two sections, conceptually, and even, to a certain extent, in content. The emphasis in the basic section is to provide a reasonably succinct review of the existing information in fields such as cellular immunology and immediate hypersensitivity. The clinical section concentrates on human diseases with strong immunologic overtones, with emphasis not only on the experimental abnormalities but also on clinical

manifestations, diagnosis, and treatment. The objective is to produce a useful, comprehensive book for medical students, house officers, fellows, and practicing physicians as well as for clinical immunologists dealing with clinically important topics such as transplantation, autoimmunity, and allergy in some detail. The immunologically mediated diseases represent a fascinating array of medical illnesses about which quite a bit has been learned but which are still incompletely understood in terms of their pathogenesis, prevention, and treatment. As such they are worthy of intensive further investigation in both man and suitable experimental animal models. It is hoped that this book may help to attract new young investigators who can help to solve some of the remaining problems.

I would like to thank my secretarial staff at Washington University, Mary Anne Blue, Nancy Grimshaw, and Evelyn Oberbeck, and Medical Editors at W. B. Saunders, Marie Low and Suzanne Boyd, for their help in the preparation of this book.

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