BOOK REVIEW

L'Épaule, en pratique rhumatologique (The Shoulder in Rheumatological Practice). By S. de Sèze, A. Ryckewaert, and M. Maitre. 1959. Pp. 167, 208 figs, bibl. Masson, Paris.

This little book summarizes the authors' experiences of shoulder lesions over a 5-year period at the Hôpital Lariboisière, Paris. The standard of the 208 illustrations (mostly radiographs) is exceptionally high and the text is supported by numerous individual case reports, and by reference to the relative frequency of the various lesions in the authors' practice.

The opening chapter deals briefly but clearly with the anatomy of the shoulder, emphasizing the two chief synovial cavities, glenohumeral joint and subdeltoid bursa, which take part in shoulder movement, and stressing the relative thinness of the barrier between them. The acromio-clavicular and sterno-clavicular joints and the subscapular gliding plane receive brief mention. Two arthrograms, using injected contrast media, illustrate a normal and an abnormal shoulder joint. One could have wished for more of these, and also for more reference to photographs and dissections of the morbid anatomy of the shoulder at operation or autopsy. The sections on gout, ankylosing spondylitis, and rheumatoid arthritis are adequate. (Many British rheumatologists would question the statement that the shoulders are far more frequently involved than the feet in rheumatoid arthritis.) The authors emphasize the need for early treatment of shoulder lesions in rheumatoid

arthritis and ankylosing spondylitis in order to prevent serious disability. The section on tuberculous arthritis of the shoulder is one of the best in the book, since it emphasizes, with case reports, the insidious onset of such lesions, which may closely mimic (and be treated as) a simple peri-arthritis of the shoulder unless the diagnosis is thought of and x rays taken. The often neglected subject of osteo-arthritis of the shoulder receives attention, cases of apparently primary osteo-arthritis being cited as well as cases in which the arthritis is secondary to previous disease, trauma, and congenital deformity. The section on the bone diseases and tumours affecting the shoulder is valuable though hardly comprehensive. The book is least convincing when it comes to the treatment of peri-arthritis of the shoulder. A wide variety of procedures are tendered as beneficial without the proviso that the condition frequently improves spontaneously. Nor is it clear why it should be recommended that phenylbutazone (which is rapidly effective by mouth) be given by injection or suppository; this can hardly be due to regard for the stomach, since prednisolone in a dose of 30 to 40 mg./day is suggested as an alternative. These, however, are minor criticisms. The book sets out to be a handy and practical reference book on the problems of the shoulder as seen in a rheumatology clinic, and as such it is one of the best of its kind. (It was awarded the Acqui prize for a work published in 1958.)

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