

laboratory workers in relevant fields. Details from Professor D L Gardner, Department of Histopathology, University Hospital of South Manchester, Withington, Manchester M20 8LR.

Clinical vignette

'J'ai étudié les malades non les maladies.'

From: François Sigismond Jaccoud in Delahaye A, Lecrosnier E, eds. *Leçon d'ouverture du cours de Clinique Médicale* (9 November 1886).

Submitted by Professor E G L Bywaters.

Book reviews

The Rheumatological Physical Examination. Edited by H Little. Pp. 149. US\$39.50. Grune and Stratton: Florida. 1986.

This book is aimed at students, interns, and trainees in rheumatology. The introduction correctly states that physical examination is paramount in rheumatological management and that it is a bedside activity. It follows that it can only be properly learnt at the bedside. A written text will serve for reference and for revision. This particular volume will need to be extensively revised and rearranged before it becomes useful for its purpose.

It opens with separate chapters on the general features of normal and of abnormal joints. This is followed by the longest chapter, which deals with the three minute complete examination of the normal co-operative patient, lavishly illustrated with photographs. Then, separate chapters deal with the detailed examination of individual joints or regions. Each of these chapters begins with an outline of embryonal development, which is sketchy and not quite relevant, followed by an anatomical description of each joint which is not quite detailed enough for the serious student.

Many illustrations appear twice and there are separate numbering sequences for diagrams and for photographs. As a result the numbering system is totally confusing. I would have preferred to see a single sequence of chapters and illustrations with differential typeface for the 'rapid' and the 'in depth' examinations.

The last chapter describes a method of measuring muscle strength by means of a modified sphygmomanometer device. This method is widely used for measuring grip strength. Curiously, this application is not described. Normal values are not given and validation of the method is not mentioned in the text or the references.

The editor decided to exclude features of spinal cord, nerve root, and peripheral nerve lesions (apart from carpal tunnel), though such conditions frequently enter the differential diagnosis of rheumatological cases and form an integral part of the management of such patients in this country. In view of the wide possible variability of normal

joints in different individuals there is insufficient emphasis on the assessment of unilateral lesions by comparison with the other side.

Several common features and procedures have been omitted, notably the isometric testing of muscles to detect rotator cuff lesions in the shoulder and in the hip and epicondylar lesions at the elbow. Heberden's and Bouchard's nodes, Baker's cyst, and hallux rigidus are not mentioned. The differentiation of a knee effusion from synovial proliferation by means of the patellar tap and the method of testing for plantar fasciitis are not described. Neither are mid-tarsal axial rotation of the foot and the 'window' sign of synovitis in the metatarsophalangeal joints.

Various features are poorly described or misleading. Twice, the mechanism involved in 'cracking' joints is explained wrongly; and pure testing of hip rotation is omitted. I would also disagree with the statement that thoracic spinal rotation can be tested in the standing subject.

This book could form the basis of an excellent second edition.

Consultant Rheumatologist,
Barnet General Hospital

W Y LOEBL

Rheumatology 85. Eds. Peter M Brooks and John R York. Pp. 484. Dfl.250.00. Elsevier: Amsterdam. 1986.

Rheumatology 85 comprises a series of articles covering a broad range of rheumatological topics, including much related basic science. The book is loosely based on the series of review lectures given at the 1985 ILAR conference in Sydney and is thus more a 'state of the art' review than a collation of the multitude of original reports presented at that meeting. It has been published barely a year after the event and includes some articles with references to work published or 'in press' in 1985 — tribute indeed to editorial tenacity! The price of such speed is the photolithographic reproduction of authors' original manuscripts which differ in format and typeface and are often difficult to read rapidly. The overall impression is unattractive.

The articles vary in approach and style: none is outstanding, though I was interested to read those dealing with repetitive strain injury, a topic more of us will have to grapple with in the near future, I fear. The inclusion of a few brief chairman's comments adds little except to remind the reader that the book purports to be a congress report.

I approached this 500 page, £65.00 tome with some trepidation and emerge from the experience not really convinced that it has added much original information to the already vast rheumatological literature. If someone is looking for an update it bears consideration, but I would not recommend its automatic purchase either by individuals or for departmental libraries.

Consultant Rheumatologist,
Bloomsbury Rheumatology Unit,
The Middlesex Hospital,
London W1

MICHAEL SHIPLEY