
This book is written by an English orthopedic surgeon primarily for the use of orthopedic residents, nursing, and physiotherapy staff of hospitals with orthopedic wards. It contains detailed instruction on the application of a variety of kinds of traction, both common and uncommon. These details are not normally found in standard texts. For those with an interest in historical aspects of traction the references are excellent. The sections on traction are clearly the best part of the book.

The usefulness of the book is limited for the American audience by the recommendation of British products. Some terminology is unfamiliar to the American reader. The term zinc oxide strapping rather than adhesive tape is an example. Two sections of this text seem curiously out of place. Several pages are devoted to clinical tests for instability of the newborn hip and the final chapter is devoted to tourniquets. While both are well written, they seem inappropriate.

The weakest portion of the book is the section on bracing and footwear. The different materials available to orthotists and the differing uses of plastics are such that this section is not useful for an American audience. While there are interesting and informing sections in this book, its spotiness makes it difficult to recommend. I would agree with the authors that its primary usefulness will be to those in training, but the price of $19.00 suggests that its use will be confined to hospital libraries.

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The second edition of Sir Herbert’s splendid monograph, three years after the first edition, provides an opportunity to indicate the great value of this beautifully produced, well illustrated, authoritative and practical work on peripheral nerve injuries. Although the changes in the second edition are not major (the book is approximately the same length and has essentially the same organization and illustrations), some attention has been given to correcting errors in the first edition and giving additional emphasis to nerve grafting and so forth. One of the greatest values of this monograph is that it is written by the outstanding authority in the English language on the surgical management of peripheral nerve injuries. It is based upon Seddon’s personal experience which is carefully weighed, criticized, and evaluated against the experience of others as sampled in the literature and from his colleagues in the field.

The monograph is logically constructed. The illustrations are pertinent to the text, are of sufficient size and are reproduced on such high quality paper that they are excellent tools to the student of the problem. The emphasis is clinical but the foundations of management are appropriately laid. When only empiricism persists, Sir Herbert, with characteristic scientific honesty, so indicates. The reference list is comprehensive. One can identify only a rare error in the index. If one were to add one other criticism, it would be that one does not find comment about the recent developments in the use of electrical recording of nerve action potentials intraoperatively such as furthered by the work of Kline and co-workers. This volume should be looked upon as the standard clinical work in the field. It provides an excellent yardstick against which to compare other treatises, and as a single-authored book it has the individual writer’s style, continuity and coherence. It is highly recommended to all practicing in the field of neurological diagnosis and treatment, orthopedic surgeons and surgeons who manage trauma. It is a must for any general medical library and it should be the peripheral nerve injury reference book for medical students and nonsurgical physicians.

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TO BE AN INVALID—The Illness of Charles Darwin—Ralph Colp, Jr., MD, Acting Director of the Psychiatric Section, Columbia University Health Service. The University of Chicago Press, 5801 Ellis Avenue, Chicago (60637), 1977. 280 pages, $15.00.

Pathography, the clinical aspects of biography, has long fascinated both historians and physicians. The role of illness or disability in the creative life of Beethoven, for instance Beethoven’s deafness, Dostoevsky’s epilepsy or William Halsted’s cocaine and subsequent morphine addiction, have long beguiled the biographer. Using Freud’s techniques, psychological portraits such as Erik Erikson’s Young Man Luther, or Freud himself on Leonardo and on Moses, have received much publicity in recent years. Hitler, Richard Nixon, Woodrow Wilson and Thomas Jefferson, are only a few of the many subjects for such studies.

The middle and latter 19th century seems to have been a particularly rife period for vague, disabling illnesses in numbers of otherwise prominent and successful people. Florence Nightingale, Charles Darwin, Henry as well as William James, Henry Adams, Elizabeth Browning, and many more, all suffered periods of great incapacity. Sir George Pickering has recently collected some of these pathographies in a book entitled Creative Malady. Nightingale and Darwin receive the most extended treatment by Sir George, who believes they used their psychologically induced symptoms to retreat from their social duties in order to get a great deal of their work done.

Charles Darwin’s illness, especially manifested by nausea, vomiting and great weakness, has been the subject of numerous papers and several previous books. To Dr. Ralph Colp goes the credit for the most extensive study yet done, though his conclusions are really not terribly startling. Dr. Colp, who is Director of the Psychiatry Section, Columbia University Health Service, concludes his extensive research with the observation that psychological stresses were the most probable cause for Darwin’s symptoms. On the way to this conclusion, Colp convincingly disposes of a number of previous theories such as Chagas disease contracted on the voyage of the Beagle, chronic arsenic poisoning from use of Fowler’s solution and illness due to some form of inherited weakness. That Darwin lived more than 72 years, most of the last 50 of them plagued by illness, is some evidence that he was not suffering from a progressive organic disorder.

The intense psychological strain of creativity and the emotional burden of overthrowing church dogma and fighting the beliefs of many recognized scientists of his day apparently took an immense toll. Thus Colp maintains the theory of evolution was conceived and promulgated despite severe illness, not because of it as Pickering.
argued. All in all, this is a very convincing book, easy to follow in its lines of argument, though occasionally Dr. Colp retreats to conjecture such as "may have been." For physicians interested in a good historical case study of one man's illness, plus a great deal of feeling for 19th century life and medicine, this is the book.

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THE JOINTS OF THE ANKLE—Verne T. Inman, MD, PhD, Professor Emeritus of Orthopaedic Surgery, University of California, San Francisco; The Williams & Wilkins Co., 428 E. Preston St., Baltimore (21202), 1976. 117 pages, $12.95.

This is a superb and classic monograph. It is clearly and carefully written. The author has been a premier investigator of gait for many years. He is a clinician with great proficiency in anatomy and biomechanics. The data presented have been gathered over a long period and are presented in a scholarly and well organized fashion. The book primarily deals with the ankle and subtalar joints. It dispels misconceptions about anatomy and physiology, elucidates generalizations regarding motion of the ankle and subtalar joints, and stresses individual variations. While this monograph will be of interest primarily to orthopedists, anatomists and those interested in biomechanics, it may also serve as a model of investigative techniques of joint motion.

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THE NORMAL LUNG—The Beals for Diagnosis and Treatment of Pulmonary Disease—John F. Murray, MD, Professor of Medicine and Member of the Senior Staff of the Cardiovascular Research Institute, University of California, San Francisco; Chief of Chest Division of the Medical Service, San Francisco General Hospital. W. B. Saunders Company, West Washington Square, Philadelphia (19103), 1976. 354 pages, $14.50.

Like many areas of medicine, respiration has had its own recent knowledge explosion due to major advances in anatomy, physiology, neurophysiology, biochemistry and immunology. This 334-page overview, written by an eminent chest physician, stems from the valid premise that the practice of respiratory medicine is based upon a sound understanding of normal lung function and structure and the interrelationship. Dr. Murray attempts to concisely present "as much of the new information about the lung" as possible in an informative, readable and effective format. The author has admirably succeeded in most of his 12 chapters. The Normal Lung is also a solid review of "classic" respiration. It, therefore, has considerable value for medical students, house staff, post-doctoral fellows and physicians in practice, as well as for basic scientists. However, preparation in some basic principles may be helpful, for example, in the chapter on ventilation. Physiologic interpretation of selected pulmonary function data is emphasized and not their method of measurement. For the latter, the reader is wisely referred to other sources.

The following topics are well explained and concisely explored: lung embroyology and postnatal development, ventilation and perfusion, gas exchange, acid-base, neural regulatory mechanisms, exercise adaptations, defenses and age-related changes. The content is complete, current, accurate and generally excellent. Few overviews give much mention (let alone chapters) to new but essential areas such as pulmonary lymphatic and nervous systems, immunology and aging effects. The author repeatedly correlates structure and function and effectively uses clinical examples when he enhance the understanding of normal respiration. The individual chapter outlines are helpful to the reader as he progresses to new topics. The figures and tables are generally simple, strategically located, helpful and numerous (present in 60 percent of the book). Many previously unpublished illustrations are also present. References are quoted effectively, numerous (average of 46 per chapter) and current.

Despite the immense amounts of summarized data is written with authority and references, the author is the first to admit to the possible absence or controversy of certain topics, limitations of current knowledge and dangers of extrapolating animal data to the human bio-system. One is frequently stimulated by excellent, thought-provoking questions raised by the author. The few deficits in the book are mainly omissions of such matters as discussion of the occlusion pressure and breath-holding time in the chapter on regulation of ventilation. The chapter on defense mechanisms does not go "one step further" to briefly discuss the specific responses of the lung to immunologic injury. Gross anatomy is minimal. Only a single pulmonary angiographic illustration is used. Presentation of normal chest roentgenograms, bronchograms, bronchoscopic photographs, and even computer tomographs might be effective teaching devices. Lung metabolism involving lipids, proteases and collagen is also lacking.

How does this book compare with the well-known texts on respiration? This book will not replace them, but will strongly complement and enhance any respiratory library because of its uniqueness in covering almost all aspects of normal respiration. It is complete and understandable. The Normal Lung is likely to become another classic.

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FLUORESCENT PROTEIN TRACING—Fourth Edition—R. C. Nairn, MD, PhD(L’pool), FRCP, FRCPA, FRACP, FRSE, Professor and Chairman, Department of Pathology and Immunology, Monash University; Honorary Consultant Pathologist, Alfred Hospital, Prince Henry’s Hospital and Queen Victoria Memorial Hospital, Melbourne, Australia; Foreword by J. R. Marrack, DSO, MC, MA, MD(Cantab), Emeritus Professor of Chemical Pathology, University of London, Longman, Inc., Churchill Livingston - Medical Division, 9 West 44th St., New York City (10036), 1976. 644 pages, $45.00.

Fluorescent methods have become standard procedures in many laboratories for the detection of protein and antibody. Although the techniques have remained relatively unchanged over recent years, the applications have expanded considerably. There are few complete reviews and texts available specifically on this subject. One of the classics is provided by R. C. Nairn. The book is well organized and extensively covers details of fluorescent procedures. Methods are discussed in detail, with attention to conjugation of proteins, properties of conjugated proteins, the theory and use of fluorescent microscopy and the use of fluorescent methods for protein and antibody studies. The color photographs provided are extremely useful for those unfamiliar with various forms of fluorescent. The appendix is useful for carrying out specific procedures which are discussed in the main text. Extensive referencing has been given. Again, this is well organized, although I would question the value of providing more than 250 pages of references. The book should be extremely useful to those laboratories engaged in fluorescent methods.

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