

plete, since many of the species have received only cursory attention aside from that devoted to them by Miller. Pathologists concerned with diseases caused by *Hypoxylon* would have welcomed information on pathogenicity. For example, *H. pruinaum* causes a destructive canker in a number of species of *Populus* and is of interest to, and has been studied in some detail by, forest pathologists, but this is not evident from the present monograph. *Hypoxylon pruinaum* has been renamed *H. mammatum* by Miller; while one cannot quarrel with the taxonomic legality of this change, it is unfortunate that the name cannot be conserved, since the specific epithet *pruinaum* has been so long and so widely used by those concerned with the pathogenic aspects of the fungus.

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Too Abridged?

A New System of Anatomy. Sir Solly Zuckerman. Oxford University Press, New York, 1961. xiii + 579 pp. Illus. \$17.50.

This book, physically attractive but weighing 5 pounds, is a combination of dissecting guide, atlas, and text, trimmed to fit the program of the student's first year in medical school at the University of Birmingham (England); during this year, the time allotted for dissection is 303 hours, divided among the parts of the body as follows: upper limb, 44 hours; lower limb, 44 hours; thorax, 23 hours; abdomen, 75 hours; head and neck, 117 hours. The way in which the subject matter on the anatomy of the entire body is compressed into the pages of this book and the author's justification for so doing are best explained in his own words: "Knowing that the average student soon forgets the mass of anatomical detail he is sometimes enjoined to learn, and with the object of encouraging the kind of study which provides a three-dimensional idea of the structure of the body, I have tried to eliminate detail which has no apparent scientific or educational value, or which, to the best of my knowledge, has little obvious clinical significance."

In the brief introduction, the student's attention is directed to variation in

human anatomy: "Do not be surprised if, for example, in the cadaver you are dissecting, an artery arises from some main trunk differently from the way described. Indications are given in the text about those structures which are most variable in their disposition." Subsequently the indications are given most often by such expressions as: "there usually springs"; "it normally gives"; and "these normally begin."

"The nomenclature used is, wherever possible, an English equivalent of the Paris *Nomina Anatomica*." Terms of direction, following the *N.A.* and based on the anatomical position, are explained on page 4 but discarded thenceforth for such terms as upper, lower, above, behind, below, in front of, upward, backwards and the like.

Most of the figures are "touched-up photographs of actual dissections which display what a student should see when he follows the text." There is a softness about these which is very pleasing to the eye but which, at the same time, makes it necessary to refer to the text (or, hopefully, to the cadaver) to determine significant details, such as sites of attachment. This soft quality makes the bones appear to be made of rubber or plastic.

The text is an intricately woven blend of explicit directions for using the scalpel, instructions to turn the freed structure first this way and then that, and descriptions of what "you will see." Although the second paragraph of the preface begins, "Topographical anatomy is essentially a visual discipline," it is likely that the student will see what he is directed to see rather than what the cadaver presents. Thus, the great opportunity of using his training in dissection to develop and train his powers of observation (the most essential attribute of the physician) is wasted and dissection becomes merely an exercise—not an educational experience.

On two counts this book fails, in my opinion, to provide a satisfactory introduction to the study of anatomy, an introduction through which the student should gain the confidence and independence to explore and interpret any anatomical problem that may confront him: (i) the explicitness of directions for dissecting and observing anatomical structures and their relationships will limit the student's ability to discover the structure of the cadaver; (ii) the size of the book, even though the information is restricted, will discourage him from consulting compre-

hensive reference works. Perhaps more than any other of the abbreviated anatomy texts published during the last decade, both in this country and in Great Britain, this one is likely to strip the student of any enthusiasm he brings to the subject.

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Ascomycetous Fungi

A World Monograph of the Genus *Pleospora* and Its Segregates. Lewis E. Wehmeyer. University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor, 1961. ix + 451 pp. Illus. \$15.

For more than a century, the ubiquitous genus *Pleospora* has been used as the repository for a varied array of fungus forms that have dark muriform spores. More than a hundred mycologists have described species in the genus itself or species improperly placed in related genera, necessitating transfer. Except for a few limited compilations, such as that in Saccardo's *Sylloge Fungorum*, no thoroughgoing attempt has been made heretofore to bring taxonomic order out of the existing confusion by a comparative study of available material, but Lewis Wehmeyer, in this monograph, has undertaken the task. He met the problem presented by inadequate and often erroneous descriptions in the widely scattered literature by basing his studies and the resulting taxonomic decisions on 1200 specimens representing a large proportion of the named species. From this material he derived data for a comprehensive account of the comparative morphology, the host, and the geographic distribution of the genus.

Taxonomically the genus is divided into five subgenera, of which all but one are described as new. One hundred species are recognized, with 18 in three segregated, but closely related, genera. Several hundred binomials are reduced to synonymy. Species are separated on a strictly morphological basis, with particular attention to the spores. Drawings or photomicrographs, or both, of the spores of all but two species emphasize this latter point. Conidial stages known to be possessed by some of the species are not discussed. Each species is adequately described, its synonyms cit-