

**RAILWAY INJURIES: WITH
SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THOSE
OF THE BACK AND NERVOUS
SYSTEM, IN THEIR MEDICO-
LEGAL AND CLINICAL ASPECTS**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649514281

Railway Injuries: With Special Reference to Those of the Back and Nervous System, in Their Medico-Legal and Clinical Aspects by Herbert W. Page

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

HERBERT W. PAGE

**RAILWAY INJURIES: WITH
SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THOSE
OF THE BACK AND NERVOUS
SYSTEM, IN THEIR MEDICO-
LEGAL AND CLINICAL ASPECTS**

RAILWAY INJURIES:

WITH

*SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THOSE OF THE BACK AND
NERVOUS SYSTEM,*

IN THEIR

MEDICO-LEGAL AND CLINICAL ASPECTS.

BY

HERBERT W. PAGE, M.A.,

M.C. CANTAB, F.R.C.S. ENG.

SURGEON TO ST. MARY'S HOSPITAL, AND LECTURER ON SURGERY

AT ITS MEDICAL SCHOOL;

CONSULTING SURGEON TO THE CUMBERLAND INFIRMARY;

EXAMINER IN SURGERY, UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE.

PHILADELPHIA:

P. BLAKISTON, SON & COMPANY,

1012 WALNUT STREET.

1891.

I ESTEEM IT A HIGH HONOUR

TO BE ALLOWED

TO

DEDICATE THIS BOOK

TO A PHYSICIAN AND NEUROLOGIST SO ILLUSTRIOUS

AS

M. CHARCOT.

"Hysteria breaks all laws, except its own rules of eccentricity,"

—WHER MITCHELL.

"The figure of Hysteria shrinks in proportion as the various forms of organic disease acquire greater solidity and sharper definition."

—BUZZARD.

"Signs are facts ; they are of a positive character : they may be at any time verified ; they never mislead, if properly used. Symptoms are quite different : they are generally statements rather than facts ; they are statements of subjective conditions ; they are generally matter of testimony, accurate and true or inaccurate yet intended to be true, or inaccurate and intentionally false ; they are seldom capable of verification. The absence, indeed, of symptoms may be an important symptom or indication."—MATTHEWS DUNCAN.

INTRODUCTION.

THE aim of this book is to give an account of the injuries sustained in railway and similar accidents which become the subject of medico-legal inquiry. In a book published in 1883, "Injuries of the Spine and Spinal Cord and Nervous Shock" (Churchill, 2nd ed., 1885), the results of my experience up to that time, together with the views I had been led to form of the nature of railway injuries, were placed on record. While this work is to a considerable extent founded upon the book of 1883, and draws largely from it, the scheme is somewhat different, for it is now no longer necessary to say wherein I had come to differ, and that very widely, from the opinions then prevailing as to the nature of these injuries. The task of preparing the former book had not been undertaken, it is right to say, without ample personal observation of the cases and injuries described. I had indeed been seeing them frequently during a period of nine years, and from the beginning I had resolved that I would not write a line upon the subject until after, at least, five years' experience. The four years devoted to the preparation of that book afforded time for an inquiry into the after-histories of a large number of injured persons, and a table of cases formed no inconsiderable part of it. It has been impossible again to undertake the extraordinary and systematic labour which that inquiry involved, the labour of travelling thousands of miles and the inconvenience of frequent absence from London. The length of time which was spent over the preparation of the former work has, moreover, been fully justified, for although I have more to say in the present work than I said before, yet I have nothing to unsay as being out of accord with the later experience of eight additional years. And I have

the further satisfaction of knowing that the views which I then propounded have been practically accepted by all who are familiar and have to do with injuries of this class, both in this country and in America, as well as in France, Germany, and elsewhere. It is unnecessary, therefore, again to travel over the ground which was formerly occupied in dealing with concussion of the spinal cord and "concussion of the spine." The theory which attributed the nervous symptoms after railway injury to meningo-myelitis of the brain and spinal cord no longer meets with general acceptance,¹ and it is hardly likely to regain it in the future, unless it has the support of more pathological and clinical facts than were originally adduced in its favour. The consequences of railway injury are happily not so grave as that theory demanded, but they are none the less deserving of attention because of the serious, albeit usually transient, effects which are wrought upon the nervous system by this form of accident.

Renewed attempts have been made in recent years to unravel and explain the complex nature of collision injuries; and by many writers in this country and abroad, by Thorburn, Dreschfeld, Ross, and Collier here; by Weir Mitchell, Dana, Hodges, Putnam, and others in America; by Charcot and many of his disciples, by Guinon and Berthez, Moricourt, Terrier, and Vibert in France; by Oppenheim, Strümpell, Bernhardt, and Westphal in Germany, and by a host of others, fresh light has been shed upon the traumatic psycho-neuroses and on the hysterical and neurasthenical conditions which are prone to ensue from the profound mental disturbance, and the shock to the whole nervous system, which a railway accident causes. This practically was the view which I sought to uphold, that most of the strange nervous symptoms so commonly seen after railway accidents were not due to physical injury sustained by the spinal cord, but were the more or less immediate concomitants of the profound mental emotion aroused by the unquestionably special features and incidents of every collision. And I endeavoured to show how the accompaniment of some form of injury to extra-spinal, muscular, and ligamentous structures

¹ "Est définitivement abandonnée" is the expression of a French writer, Dr. Dutil.

was at the root of the entirely erroneous notion that the nervous symptoms were due to lesion in that part of the central nervous system which has its seat in the spinal column. The further experience gained since I last wrote has confirmed the opinions which I then expressed; and the extensive opportunities which I enjoyed of studying this class of injuries during my seventeen years' tenure of the office of Surgeon to the London and North-Western Railway Company, warrant me now in laying before the profession in a more comprehensive manner what I have to say on the subject of Railway Injuries.

The book makes no pretension to be a text-book of nervous diseases. It is simply one chapter in their history; and if for convenience' sake it is itself divided into chapters, it is as one chapter on the subject of which it treats that it must be read. The various parts of it are meant to hold together, and if the statements made are not every one of them supported by the published record of individual cases, none the less are they founded on actual experience and observation. I have throughout endeavoured fairly and evenly to hold the balance, bearing in mind that no work upon such a subject can be, as I am desirous this should be, of use to others, unless it is conceived in a judicial spirit, and is free from partiality and bias.

In conclusion, I have to express my thanks to my friend Mr. Thorburn for many valuable suggestions.

HERBERT W. PAGE.

146 HARLEY STREET, W.,
December 1890.

