"Tell us... About the Lymphatic System"

Comment

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A delightful passage in Thomas Mann's masterpiece The Magic Mountain has long
been destined for the pages of a journal devoted to lymph. How appropriate that the
story is set in Davos, only 3 hours by train from the editorial offices of the Journal of
Lymphology in Zurich.

In response to Hans Castorps request "Tell us about the lymphatic system", the Hof­
rat replies (in part) „Lymph is the most refined, the most rarefied, the most intimate
of the body juices. It is the juice of juices, the very essence, you understand.“ Although
Thomas Mann considered these words “lively and whimsical”, viewed in the light of
current knowledge there was little need for apology. The insight reflected by the
contents of the entire passage is remarkable.

A vast amount of information about lymph has become available since 1924, the
year The Magic Mountain was published. Now new knowledge seems to be accumulat­
ing at an unprecedented rate and the simple purpose of the Journal of Lymphology
is to answer the plea for information voiced by young Castorp. Wheter or not the
Journal succeeds depends upon the willingness of a small but growing coterie of in­
vestigators to use it for sharing their enthusiasm, interest and results with others.