

## BOOK REVIEWS

### *Essentials of General Anesthesia— With Special Reference to Dentistry.*

R. R. MACINTOSH, M.A., M.D., F.R.C.S., D.A.; AND FREDA B. PRATT, M.D., D.A. 334 pp. Blackwell Scientific Publications, Oxford, England, 1940. Price 25 s.

The authors of this recent work (November, 1940) require little introduction, being Nuffield Professor of Anesthetics and first Nuffield Assistant, respectively. (Oxford.) Their book, admittedly directed to those interested in dental anesthesia, is well done and comprehensive. The text is well printed on good paper stock.

The content of the book follows a fairly conventional pattern, starting with the history of anesthesia. Theories of anesthesia, certain basic physiological phenomena, signs of anesthesia, premedication, choice of agents (with special emphasis on nitrous oxide), endotracheal technic, respiratory obstruction, emergencies, equipment and legal considerations follow in logical sequence.

The approach, while fundamentally practical in nature, always takes cognizance of basic physiological phenomena. Commendable is the constant reference to the important nature of anoxia in its various forms. This is noted particularly in the chapter on "Theory of anesthesia." Departing from the traditional manner of presentation of the various theories, with the involved pros and cons, the hypothetical, working basis of anoxia is put forward, and the nature of anesthesia is thereby surprisingly well elucidated.

Illustrations of very high quality are appropriately included in the text. These are simple, very well done (many in color) and eminently to the point.

This is particularly true in the section on "Endotracheal Intubation," where there is close correlation between the text, and the various positions of the laryngoscope and the respective picture visualized at various points in the tract. The excellent discussion of cyanosis is illustrated with colored chart and drawings. The teachings of Guedel are followed closely in defining the stages and signs of anesthesia.

An unique chapter for textbooks is an illustrated one describing in detail cylinder valves and reducing valves. The very simple, convenient and satisfactory Macintosh apparatus which deserves more popularity than it has had in this country, is carefully described with illustrations and directions for use in dental anesthesia.

Unfortunately, perhaps, is the (great and minute) detail in the discussion of practical considerations in dental anesthesia. Minutiae in such fineness that seems fairly pointless,—that such are bound to be confusing to the novice, and "old hat" to the veteran.

On the whole, however, it is definitely felt that this work is a valuable addition to the library of any physician or dentist interested in anesthesia. It is especially commended by its modern scientific approach and its ever cognizant awareness of the physiological basis of the specialty.

A. T. R.

*"Schmerzbetäubung und Seelische Schonung,"* Pain Relief and Psychological Management. CARL FEVERS, M.D., Ph.D. 174 pages. Ferdinand Enke Verlag, Stuttgart, Germany, 1940. Price, R. M. 6.50.

The author tries to establish a typology of pain with two main repre-

sentatives, the "tetanic" or "sympatheticotonic" and the "pathic" or "vagotonic" type, each one requiring principally different anesthetic treatment.

After carefully re-reading, the practical result of Dr. Ferber's rather elaborate psychological, philosophical, anthropological and biological contemplations boils down to the suggestion to give no atropine to the tetanic type and to approach the patient with a sergeant's voice and behavior ("Kasernenhofton") whereas bedside manners are preferable for the pathic personality.

In spite of some single striking observations, the general lack of content together with the extremely difficult and hazy language considerably injures the value of this well-intentioned work.

R. W.

"Die Örtliche Betäubung Nach Ihrem Heutigen Stand," Local Anesthesia and its Development to its Present Stage. RICHARD GOLDHAHN, M.D., Director of the District Hospital in Liegnitz. 60 pages. Ferdinand Enke Verlag, Stuttgart, Germany, 1940. Price, R. M. 4.80.

This very instructive little book offers a review of all local anesthetics in use nowadays and their sphere of application. The author abstains\* from opinions and recommendations, giving instead descriptions and references.

The first part deals with the chemistry of local anesthetics, the problems arising through the addition of supracin, the comparison of anesthetic and toxic effects of different agents and

\* With a few exceptions.

their combination with other agents, description of various forms of poisoning and their treatment and the administration of anesthetics as independent therapeutic measures. The latter is mentioned in reference to neuralgia, angina pectoris, angiospastic gangrene, postoperative intestinal paralysis, frostbite and stiffened joints. Another suggestion is to use anesthetic blockade around inflamed areas and to administer local anesthesia in order to accelerate the healing of wounds and ulcers.

As an improvement of technic, Goldhahn mentions Kirschner's high pressure local anesthesia.

A list of all available local anesthetics and a table showing the varying sensitivity of different organs complete the first general part of the book.

The second part is devoted to the description of special technic, mainly for major operations, indications and contraindications, statistics of complications and accidents. For amputations in older people, the author recommends infiltration of the cross-section of the affected limb at a level just above the site of amputation, preferably by means of Kirschner's high pressure apparatus.

The last chapters deal with all known modifications of spinal and peridural anesthesia and stress Kirschner's regulated segmental technic as a considerable progress.

Although Goldhahn's booklet cannot and is not intended to replace more elaborate and detailed works on block anesthesia, it will prove of high value to anyone who is interested in applicability and development of local anesthetic agents.

R. W.