

THE ANESTHESIOLOGIST'S BOOKSHELF

HUBERTA M. LIVINGSTONE, M.D., *Editor*

Essays on the First Hundred Years of Anesthesia. Volume I. By W. STANLEY SYKES, M.B.E., B. CHIR. (Cantab.), D.A. Late Anaesthetist to the General Infirmary at Leeds; to the Hospital for Women and St. James Hospital, Leeds; to the Leeds Dental Hospital; to the Halifax Royal Infirmary and to the Dewsbury General Hospital. Cloth \$7.00. Pp. 171, with 39 illustrations. E. & S. Livingstone Ltd., Teviot Place, Edinburgh, Publisher; The Williams & Wilkins Company, Baltimore 2, Maryland, exclusive U. S. Agents, 1960.

This book is composed of eight chapters, each of which is an essay. The author has not written a consecutive history but has concentrated upon subjects which have been dealt with incompletely or have been omitted by other historians. The result is a volume filled with a wealth of interesting information which is presented in very readable style.

The illustrations are of particular interest. They include many drawings and diagrams of anesthetic and resuscitation equipment, reproduced from the original articles, as well as photographs made by the author of documents and scenes associated with anesthesia.

This book is recommended both because it is excellent reading and for the reasons given by the author in his preface. "The value of history is that it may enable us to avoid making too often the mistakes that others have already made. But in order to avoid them it is essential to know about them." The reviewer is happy that this book is designated "Volume I" and hopes that Volume II is in preparation and will soon appear.

JULIA ARROWOOD, M.D.

L'Anestesia Per Via Rettale. By DOTT. SALVATORE MELI, Assistant Professor of Surgery (Anesthesia) of the Institute of Pathological Surgery of the University of Catania Medical School, with foreword by PROF. GIOACCHINO DISTEFANO, Director of

the Institute of Pathological Surgery of the University of Catania Medical School. Cloth, Lire 4000 (about \$7.50). Pp. 368, with 21 figures and diagrammatic drawings. Published in Catania, Italy, by the University of Catania, "Minerva Medical Edition," 1959.

The author of this monograph presents a review of the literature on rectal anesthesia, and reports his own experience in the production of basal narcosis by the administration of drugs by the rectal route.

The book is divided into four parts, the first of which deals rather extensively with anatomical and physiological considerations. Absorption of rectally administered agents into the vena caval and portal systems from various levels of the rectosigmoid is explained and diagrammatically illustrated. Some of the factors responsible for unsuccessful rectal anesthesia are emphasized.

The second portion of the book summarizes drugs which have been administered by the rectal route to produce sedation, including some drugs not commonly used in North America, such as rectal procaine. Two pages are devoted to trichlorethanol, and tribromethanol is mentioned, but not discussed. Comprehensive treatment has been given to the clinical use of rectal ether.

Indications and contraindications to the rectal method of producing basal narcosis are discussed in the third portion of the book, with special emphasis on use of the method as a technique of induction of general anesthesia for children, and the anatomical and physiological differences between children and adults are summarized.

The fourth part of the book, consisting of 57 pages, is devoted to a technique devised by the author, employing a suppository containing thiopentone, chlorpromazine, and atropine. Experimental results on dogs, and the author's clinical experiences are described and tabulated.

An alphabetically arranged bibliography occupies the last 24 pages of the volume, but there is a notable lack of consistency in the method of tabulating references. The titles of some articles are included, while many titles are omitted; abbreviations are clear, although they do not conform to the *Index Medicus*. The final pages of the book contain about 70 corrections of errors which might better have been noted and changed in the proofs, before publication.

Anesthesiologists who favor the rectal route for the production of basal narcosis will find this book to be a useful review, provided they read Italian.

ELIO BALDINI, M.D.

JOHN R. LINCOLN, M.D.

The Pharmacology of Anesthetic Drugs.

Revised Fourth Edition. By JOHN ADRIANI, M.D., Director, Department of Anesthesiology, Charity Hospital, New Orleans, Louisiana. Cloth. 11.00. Pp. 232, with illustrations. Charles C Thomas, Publisher, Springfield, Illinois, 1960.

Dr. John Adriani's world-wide reputation as a teacher of anesthesiology and his many textbooks for students of anesthesiology qualify him as an outstanding author in this field. This work is a revision of the Fourth Edition of "The Pharmacology of Anesthetic Drugs," which has been the outstanding teaching and reference textbook of pharmacology for anesthesiologists since 1940. Using a standardized form of presentation for each group of drugs studied, the essential information regarding these drugs is presented. Knowing the outline form, the reader can quickly and easily obtain the information sought. Detailed information on all drugs is not presented. Of great usefulness is a bibliography at the end of the book, with authors listed alphabetically under each group of drugs, followed by abbreviated titles of each work. Changes from the Third Edition include addition of the newer anesthetic drugs such as the fluoronated hydrocarbons, hydroxydione, the ataractics, and several local anesthetic drugs.

The section on muscle relaxants has been completely revised in accordance with newer concepts. New sections include a discussion of alterations of pulmonary physiology during general anesthesia, effects on anoxia on circulation and respiration, electroencephalography, hypotension deliberately induced during anesthesia, and hypothermia during anesthesia. In addition, many small changes have been made to bring the material up-to-date. While literature, research, and review articles are necessary for the anesthesiologist in training to obtain more complete information on the pharmacology of certain drugs or groups of drugs, this work remains the outstanding source of general information on the pharmacology of drugs used during anesthesia, and is an excellent reference book for quickly obtaining information regarding drug action. It should be noted that the title is now somewhat of a misnomer, because it presents the pharmacology of drugs used during anesthesia rather than just anesthetic drugs.

D. W. EASTWOOD, M.D.

Xylocaine. Chemistry, Pharmacology and Clinical Applications.

Astra, Pharmaceutical Products, Inc. With the assistance of ORAL B. CRAWFORD, M.D., GILBERT VINTON HALLOCK, M.D., ALDO P. TRUANT, PH.D. and ARTHUR S. WILDER, M.A. Cloth. Pp. 79, with 10 tables and 11 figures. Astra Pharmaceutical Products, Inc., Worcester, Massachusetts, 1960.

This book is published by the pharmaceutical house where the product is manufactured. For this reason there is bias in favor of the drug; however it is an unusually scholarly and complete discussion of its pharmacologic effects, clinical usage, and the complications which may follow its use. There is an excellent, but somewhat esoteric discussion of the physico-chemical properties of this compound which represents a departure from the more common ester group of local agents. Certain advantages in its reactions are adduced from this structural difference.

ALICE McNEAL, M.D.