

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.