

Yearbook of Anesthesia, 1974. EDITED BY J. E. ECKENHOFF. Chicago, Year Book Medical Publishers, 1974. Price: \$14.50.

Publication of the annual yearbook is a welcome event for the anesthesiologist confronted with the necessity for keeping abreast of developments related to his specialty. Again, the 1974 volume provides a convenient overview of current problems of interest, concern and controversy. Succinct editorial comment following most abstracts assists in summarizing and interpreting the material presented and frequently places it in perspective. Both basic science and clinical practice are well represented in the selection of abstracts. Location of various topics is easy since the abstracts are grouped logically and the volume is well indexed.

One might wish to take issue with some of the statements of the editors. For example, in discussion of treatment of the "central cholinergic syndrome" with physostigmine, the editor expresses surprise at the high incidence of this complication observed by the original authors. He advocates abandonment of scopolamine and does not point out that the doses of scopolamine used were in excess of those necessary to achieve an optimum clinical effect. Also, abstracts on Pain Problems were erroneously printed in the section entitled "The Informed Anesthesiologist" and vice versa. A misprint (p. 88) leaves the reader uncertain about the maximum daily dose of aminophylline. These minor criticisms do not detract from the over-all quality and usefulness of the book.

The 1974 Yearbook of Anesthesia is recommended to all individuals with interests in clinical practice and research in anesthesiology. A reader is likely to discover important references in a particular area of interest which he may have overlooked previously, and also to become familiar with problems concerning which he was previously

unaware. A series of Yearbooks collected over the years provides a ready source of reference material. Perhaps the editors and publisher might consider preparation of a periodic cumulative index, which would greatly enhance the utility of this series. Finally, many interesting tidbits of information can be gleaned from pages of this volume. It was reassuring to read that cardiac arrhythmias are not likely to be associated with dilatation of the anal sphincter in anesthetized patients. Anesthesiologists who are fishermen will learn that at times fishing represents heavy physical work and mental stress.

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Molecular Mechanisms in General Anesthesia.

EDITED BY M. J. HALSEY, R. A. MILLAR, AND J. A. SUTTON. Edinburgh, Churchill Livingstone, 1974. Price: \$26.00.

Existing understanding of the physical basis of anesthesia was discussed by 12 British and one Canadian worker at a Symposium held in London late in 1972. The papers in this volume range from structure-activity relationships in animals to the action of anesthetics on bacterial bioluminescence. Several consist of thoughtful reviews written from the point of view of the pharmacologist, the physical chemist, or the neurophysiologist. Some propound specific molecular level "theories" with great clarity and conviction, though all underline the formidable nature of the problem. This book is at the moment the best available introduction to the subject.

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