

BOOK REVIEWS

MEDICAL PROBLEMS AND THE ANAESTHETIST. LEON KAUFMAN AND EDWARD SUMNER. Chicago, Year Book Medical Publishers Inc., 1979. Price \$23.75 U.S.

THIS IS A very useful book. Volume IV in the "Current Topics in Anaesthesia" series reviews information of special relevance to the anaesthetist under the headings: Cardiovascular System; Respiratory Disease; Endocrine Disorders; Anemia. As the preface notes, "this book is intended to supplement, and not to replace, comprehensive textbooks of medicine." The reader looking for a summary of the special anaesthetic implication of a variety of medical conditions will be pleased by the easy readability of this relatively short (151 pages) text. Ample references are provided and are conveniently attached to each sub-section within the four major divisions noted above. While the formal publication date is 1979, the most recent references cited are for the year 1977, with the exception of one footnote referring to a 1978 article. The amount of attention directed to the various sections is very variable. Most obvious is the section on the "adrenal medulla (pheochromocytoma)" which is 26 pages in length, in comparison to thyroid disease, certainly a much more common problem, which is allotted only 9 pages. All in all though a most successful book. It should be useful not only for anaesthetists who care for patients with the various medical problems discussed, but also for other practitioners who manage patients either before or after the anaesthetic and surgical experience.

DOUGLAS B. CRAIG

FUNCTIONAL TOXICITY OF ANESTHESIA. DAVID L. BRUCE. New York, Grune & Stratton Inc., 1980; Toronto, Academic Press Canada. 1980. Price \$15.50 U.S.

DAVID L. BRUCE is an apt choice for the author of this monograph. He is a practising anaesthetist and he is an acknowledged scientific investigator whose major field of study has been the effects of anaesthetic agents on a variety of tissues and the total performance of the individual, especially the anaesthetist, exposed to them.

There is a refreshing directness to the author's

approach to the topic of functional anaesthetic toxicity which, as he states, may be "innocuous and entirely reversible"; yet it is essential for all anaesthetists to know as much as possible about even the temporary toxicity of their agents.

It cannot have been an easy book to write and the author occasionally is excessively exercised to define his terms of reference and to argue semantically in favour of his own interpretations. This does him no service since he has stated his position clearly and unequivocally in his preface. At times, his determination to avoid ambiguity has led him into the trap of colloquial over-simplification.

One message comes through very clearly and that is that not only are the precise effects of anaesthesia and anaesthetic agents relatively uncertain as far as central nervous system, renal and hepatic function etc. are concerned, but even the significance and particularly the inter-relation of such effects as we have observed are still largely conjectural. Such a monograph as this rightly directs our attention to the many questions we are entitled to ask, while at the same time pursuing our still remarkably safe if often empirical clinical practice.

K.M. LEIGHTON

BASIC RESUSCITATION AND PRIMARY CARE. F. WILSON AND G.W. PARK. Baltimore, University Park Press, 1980. Price: \$24.95 U.S.

THESE TWO authors are consultant anaesthetists who saw difficulties in managing resuscitation in both teaching and non-teaching hospitals. They aimed the body of information at newly qualified practitioners and senior nurses.

Their information is indeed basic, much in summary form: drug indications and doses, when-to-do-what format. This level of learning occurs in North American teaching hospitals in medical and nursing school. At this student level, the text is a useful addition since it covers much more than basic life support. Seventeen different situations from bites and stings, head and chest injuries to eclampsia, are covered.

Other sections are titled: Practical Ventilation, The Heart and Circulation in Health and Disease and pH and SI Units are covered, albeit rather briefly. So the book emerges really as a concise

text on anaesthesia and its complications. As such a review, it is worthwhile, remembering its aim at the medical and nursing student level.

The book is well organized, its drawings simple and well done but its paper of relatively rough quality.

EMERSON A. MOFFITT

MEDICAL EXAMINATION REVIEW: ANESTHESIOLOGY. THOMAS J. DEKORNFELD AND MICHAEL D. DETMER. Garden City N.Y., Medical Examination Publishing Company Ltd., 5th Edition, 1980. Price \$15.00 U.S.

NO BOOK of this kind can do more than present representative multiple choice questions; one thousand and sixty in this case. It cannot cover all fields nor cover them completely; however, being a U.S. publication, there are very specific omissions for the Canadian candidate in the dearth of reference, for instance, to internal medicine. Nevertheless, perusal of the book is good exercise and can be instructive, as long as the reader bears in mind that even complete mastery of its contents will in no way guarantee success at the examinations.

GORDON M. WYANT

PERSISTENT PAIN: VOLUME 2. SAMPSON LIPTON, Editor. London, Academic Press Ltd., 1980. Price: \$49.50.

THIS IS THE second volume in this series under the editorship of Dr. Sampson Lipton, a well-known authority in the field of chronic pain. Like its predecessor, this volume is comprised of a collection of independent essays on a large variety of subjects and, as tends to be the case in books of this nature, the value of individual contributions varies widely. The chapter on lumbosacral root pain is particularly disappointing, largely because of its surgical bias and emphasis on disc protrusion as the cause of pain. No mention is made of such conditions as root entrapment in the lateral recess, a condition which can be clearly demonstrated on CT scan, a most valuable diagnostic tool which is not even mentioned anywhere. In this chapter of 21 pages, steroid epidural blocks are accorded just two lines followed by the warning that "only experts should undertake these injections", a strange admonition by one who so freely advocates myelography, laminectomy and spinal fusion. Only 16 pages of text are allocated to "Acupuncture",

quite inadequate to "give the interested reader an insight what acupuncture is all about". The last chapter is entitled "An Introduction to Statistics and Drug Trials"; one wonders what this has to do in a book of this kind. Overall one misses the "heavy hand" of the editor, whose task it should have been to pull the book together into a more balanced presentation, even given the great variety of subjects covered. Having said all that, it is still a valuable volume for those interested in the subject of chronic pain, as some of the articles are very good indeed. The book is well produced, printed on fine glossy paper, the index is comprehensive and the radiographic reproductions are excellent.

GORDON M. WYANT

PARENTERAL & ENTERAL NUTRITION, A PRACTICAL GUIDE. G. D. PHILLIPS & C.L. ODGERS. Bedford Park, South Australia; Flinders Medical Centre, 1980. Price \$8.75 (Australian).

THE STATED AIMS of this short monograph are:

- (1) To present the principles of parenteral nutrition,
- (2) To elaborate on technical details,
- (3) To outline recent advances
- (4) To compare parenteral nutrition with tube feeding.

The introduction notes that the book is intended as a practical guide for students, and for nursing, medical and pharmacy staff who are placed in a position of managing patients receiving parenteral nutrition.

By the authors' design, the approach is didactic, with references to the literature included only when the area under discussion is considered by the authors to be controversial. This text originates from Flinders University of South Australia. North American readers will have difficulty identifying many of the manufactured parenteral products listed, as they are available primarily in Australia. Many international products are also listed. Readers interested in a comprehensive review of the topic of parenteral and enteral nutrition will be disappointed by this monograph. Those seeking a "cookbook" approach will be partially satisfied. This monograph will likely be of interest only to those anesthetists actively involved with practical problems of long term nutritional support of patients in the intensive care unit.

D.B.CRAIG

ACUPUNCTURE IN MEDICAL PRACTICE. LOUISE OFTEDAL WENSEL. Englewood Cliffs, N.J., Prentice-Hall Inc., 1980. Price: \$15.95 U.S.

MANY BOOKS have been published in recent years on acupuncture, but this is the first one this reviewer has had occasion to peruse which attempts to strike a balance between the ancient and empirical practices of acupuncture and the scientific method of Western medicine, bearing in mind also differences in culture and patient expectation. Given this definite "Western" orientation, it is the more astonishing to see that the list of conditions and syndromes for which acupuncture is recommended is even more comprehensive than that given in the standard text published in Peking by the "Academy of Traditional Chinese Medicine". It is truly astonishing to read that acupuncture is the preferred treatment for hiatus hernia, surgery being "somewhat effective in some cases, but is dangerous" (sic). Hypoplasia of penis or breast are said to yield to acupuncture which is claimed to be also the treatment of choice in disc herniation, ("All chemical anaesthetics are poisonous and potentially lethal"), neurogenic deafness and blindness, Parkinsonism and baldness, to mention only a few of the most extreme examples. On the positive side the book stresses innumerable times the need for a precise diagnosis before patients are submitted to symptomatic relief, and the anatomical locations of acupuncture points are well described, supported by good line-drawings. This book can be of help to the discerning physician who practices acupuncture only occasionally when standard modalities of treatment have failed. On the other hand this reviewer takes strong issue with the author's intention that the book be used also by those who do not have "special medical training", whatever that might mean.

GORDON M. WYANT

PHARMACOLOGIE CARDIOVASCULAIRE PULMONAIRE ET RENALE. G.J.-M. FAUCON. Paris, Doin Editeurs, 1980. (690 pages) Price \$57.00.

THIS BOOK is aimed primarily at postgraduate students en route to a master's degree or a PhD in human biology. But the author wishes his book to be useful at the same time to clinicians, cardiologists, pneumologists, nephrologists and "anesthésistes-réanimateurs". The endeavour is

ambitious and I doubt that all these people will be satisfied. I suspect that the author is a little removed from actual clinical practice from a statement like this one (p. 252):

"Norepinephrine is a good treatment for shocks not only of vascular origin but also of hypovolaemic or cardiac origin (myocardial infarct, pulmonary embolism). *This drug is, at the present time, wrongly preferred to epinephrine in these latter indications.*"

Well, this is probably not exact. I know of many cardiologists and "anesthésistes-réanimateurs" in France who would not concur with this opinion.

Likewise (p. 162), sodium nitroprusside receives a very short sixteen-line treatment. Thus, the book cannot claim comprehensive cardiovascular pharmacologic coverage from the point of view of the clinician.

The author's style fails to stimulate a captivating interest on the part of this reviewer. Many sentences are long with numerous interpolated phrases and the reader is easily lost.

With such restriction in mind, the book can be considered as a rapid reference book. Each chapter is followed by ten to twenty bibliographic references, with only two or three of them more recent than 1970.

I would not recommend this book to the busy clinician.

MARCEL BOULANGER

NEUROSURGICAL ANAESTHESIA AND INTENSIVE CARE. T. VICTOR CAMPKIN & JOHN MORRIS TURNER, Woburn, Mass., Butterworths, 1980. Price: \$49.95.

IN ONE OF THE widely-read texts on anaesthesia, published first a few years ago, thirty pages including plates were allotted to neuroanaesthesia. This present book of two hundred and fifty pages illustrates the expanded role not only of the subspecialty, but also all of the varied facets of neurological patient care which are essential information for anaesthetists.

This volume is well constructed to be a specific reference for senior undergraduate and all postgraduate students. The total problem of the patient with neurological pathology is discussed and the logic for the methods of treatment outlined and reinforced by adequate reference to relevant literature.

The reference material is well selected and full

without being redundant and overbearing in its sheer volume.

Specialists in the field of neuroanaesthesia should find the volume necessary as a condensed reference volume and adequate for all teaching purposes. In any area where a neurosurgical or neuro intensive care area is being expanded or established, this volume contains all the informa-

tion, arguments, discussion and references which would be of value to staff and administration.

This book is a more than adequate outline of all aspects of the care of a patient with neurological pathology as the situation refers to the specialist in anaesthesia or neurosurgical intensive care.

BRIAN M. MARSHALL