Book Reviews

The Liver and Anaesthesia, Vol 6, No. 4 of Ballière's Clinical Anaesthesiology. International Practice and Research

L. Strunin, S. Thomson (Guest Editors) London: Ballière Tindall, 1992, 259 pp. ISBN 0-7020-1736 £27.50

This textbook has been a long awaited update on liver and anaesthesia. Dr. Strunin published his first book on this topic in 1969. Although a number of publications have appeared since then, a book of this important and complex subject is a rare commodity. In the present book, Dr. Strunin has shared the editorial duties with Dr. Thomson and has invited an international group of 20 contributors from the USA and Europe with expertise related to the liver and anaesthesia.

The book is organized into 11 chapters commencing with an outline of anatomy, physiology, and pharmacology as it relates to the liver. There is some overlap in these chapters as might be expected with multiple authors. The anatomy chapter uses the liver lobule approach rather than the newer and more functional approach of the liver acinus described by the late Dr. A. Rappaport. Also it would have been nice to have seen the inclusion of the ultrasound-doppler methodology for the measurement of liver blood flow in these chapters.

The clinical chapters begin with preoperative assessment of patients by Dr. Strunin, who continues to omit ascites from the Pugh grading of anaesthetic risk. Drs. Harrison, Zuckerman and Zuckerman provide extensive information on the molecular biology of viral hepatitis in a chapter that gathers together a considerable body of material not readily available to the anaesthetist. This is followed by a well written discussion of laparoscopic cholecystectomy. Drs. Baubillier and Duvaldestin approach the complex topic of alcoholic liver disease while Drs. Ramsey and Swygert outline anaesthetic requirements of hepatic trauma, liver resection, and liver transplantation. The latter authors give credit to Dr. Starzl as a pioneer in the field of liver transplantation. However, perhaps proper credit is also due to Dr. Calne, as a pioneer in hepatic transplantation and in particular for his role in the use of the immunosuppressant drug, cyclosporin A, that now plays a major role in transplantation not only of the liver but also of the lung, kidney and heart.

The chapter on paediatric anaesthesia by Dr. Cook is primarily a summary of his previous publications as is the chapter on fulminant hepatic failure by Drs. Wendon

and Williams. Drs. Frink and Brown end the book with a comprehensive review of postoperative hepatic dysfunction including halothane hepatitis.

In general the chapters are clearly written and well referenced with up to date citations. There are few specific recommendations for an anaesthetic approach but rather the guidelines set by the pathophysiology, described by the various authors, provides an excellent basis for patient management by clinical anaesthetists. The book is of particular interest to those in training, and would be a useful addition to the library of any anaesthesia department.

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Anaesthesia for Children (2nd Edition)

Brown TCK, Fisk GC (Eds.). Oxford: Blackwell Scientific Publications, 1992. pp 548 (Hardback cover). ISBN 0-632-030232-2

"Fifty Years: The Australian Society of Anaesthetists 1934-1984" shows that paediatric anaesthetists have been prominent in the history and development of the specialty in that country. The editors of "Anaesthesia for Children," Drs. Brown and Fisk, were active members of the Australian Society and involved in the publication of its journal for many years. Their dedication is evident in the latest edition of their book. An introductory appreciation of the work of Drs. Margaret McClelland and John Stocks, as well as the inclusion of a rare photograph of Dr. Philip Ayre, ensure that the past is not forgotten.

The 38 chapters cover much the same ground as other texts in this field: basic anatomy, physiology and pharmacology in neonates, infants and children lead into the clinical management of common and unusual conditions. General chapters on the care of the child in hospital, for day-care surgery, in intensive care and during transport are reminders of the special needs of young patients. However, the strength of the book is in the meticulous attention to explanations of "how to do something" and the accompanying illustrations. The chapter on "Anaesthetic Management" shows a child's eyes taped for protection and a T-piece supported on a sandbag. Plastic surgical techniques are enlivened by extraordinarily clear photographs of conditions associated with difficult intubations: cleft lip and palate, Pierre Robin, Apert's, Goldenhar, Treacher Collins and Crouzon's syndromes. Un-

common conditions, such as Klippel Feil, Bardet-Biedl and Morquio's syndrome are succinctly described.

Some areas fall short of expectations. Masseter spasm and the reversal of muscle relaxants receive little attention. The dose of edrophonium quoted on p125 is one-fifth or one-tenth of the usual dosage. Approaches to day-care anaesthesia appear to be quite conservative and the section on anaesthesia and sedation for magnetic resonance imaging is brief. Controversies in these areas are influencing current North American practice in ways which may differ from Australian practice.

The 46 contributors to the authorship, mostly from Perth and Melbourne, are listed on page vi, but with unusual brevity. Some more personal details of their backgrounds would have been appreciated, as the sort of work involved for all in producing this book must have been considerable. This is a classic text. It offers sound clinical advice garnered over the career life-times of the authors. Outstanding photography makes it especially valuable as a resource for all paediatric anaesthetists.

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