

BOOK REVIEWS

RENAL FUNCTION IN ANAESTHESIA AND SURGERY. DAVID R. BEVAN. Toronto, Academic Press, Canada, 1979. Price \$44.

THIS BOOK contains much new and useful information. A concise but excellent section describes the anatomy, physiology and pharmacological action of drugs used by the anaesthetist. Anaesthetic management of the patient in renal failure is well presented. The book deserves a place in the departmental library of all teaching centres.

JOHN W. DESMOND

LECTURE NOTES ON ANAESTHETICS. JOHN N. LUNN. Linn, Mo., C.V. Mosby Co., 1979. Price \$12.

THIS SMALL BOOK has been written for medical students. The author attempts to familiarize the student with some of the basic techniques which he will be required to know when he goes into practice, and also tries to show what practicing anaesthesia as a profession is all about.

I found the book laborious and doubt if many medical students will sit down and read it.

JOHN W. DESMOND

GENERAL ANAESTHESIA. T. CECIL GRAY, JOHN F. NUNN, AND J.E. UTTING. Woburn, Ma, Butterworths, 4th ed. (2 Volumes) 1980. Price \$175.

THIS NEW EDITION of "General Anaesthesia" comes eight years after the last, which was an undoubted international success. It still addresses itself mainly to general anaesthesia with minimal comments about local anaesthesia. This is an advantage because the subject of anaesthesia has evolved to such a degree that the size of this work is almost more than can be reasonably enclosed within two pairs of covers.

The work has contributions from a large number of authors, who are mainly from the British Isles. The layout of these two volumes is similar to the previous edition, although the majority of chapters have been re-written and a lot of new material has been added, reflecting the continuing advances made in anaesthesiology

and the increase in the knowledge required for the practice of the specialty. One practical feature that has been retained and is better presented is the management of patients with specific problems. A whole new section on intensive care is inserted, which reflects the continued and increasing involvement of anaesthetists in this field.

Faults are bound to be found in a tome of this size because the large amount of material is discussed in detail in some areas and superficially in others; however one must admire the wealth of material included and any omissions are fully covered by the bibliography.

Your reviewer cannot help but wonder whether we have not reached the point of optimum book size, and whether serious consideration should be given to the financial burden that is being placed on residents and the profession in general. The price of these two volumes is certainly high and one really wonders about ways in which it could have been made cheaper; could the print have been smaller? Would it have detracted from the volumes if they had been printed on thinner, less glossy paper? These two volumes contain a wealth of information which should be available to everyone engaged in the practice of anaesthesia, but your reviewer fears that the price will put it beyond the pocket book of the large number of residents to whom it would be of enormous benefit.

W. DEMAJO

SELF-ASSESSMENT OF CURRENT KNOWLEDGE IN ANESTHESIOLOGY. 2nd ed. Eight Hundred and Seven Multiple Choice Questions and Referenced Explanatory Answers. DAVID L. TRICKEY. Garden City, N.Y., Medical Examination Publishing Co., 1980. Price \$14 U.S.

A VERY USEFUL BOOK for both the resident who is preparing for his Board examinations and the practicing anaesthetist who needs from time to time to brush up on his knowledge.

The author uses multiple choice questions and gives the answers, including the reference in each case from various text books and journals. This gives the reader a ready source to check on a

question or answer which he may not fully understand or agree with.

JOHN W. DESMOND

KEY WORDS IN ANESTHESIOLOGY. 2nd ed. N.M. GREENE. Baltimore, Williams & Wilkins, 1980. Toronto, Macmillan Company of Canada, 1980. Price \$11.50.

THE USE OF KEY WORDS is an essential part of indexing and of the process of retrieval of published material, whether through a conventional or a computerized index. Both processes can be greatly facilitated by the standardization of terminology within a set of key words appropriate to a special segment of the literature.

Dr. Greene has provided us with an exemplary catalogue of key words, subheadings and cross references for the literature of anaesthesia. Universal and intelligent use of those lists will greatly facilitate both the indexing of publications and reference to the literature. This volume should be of value to every anaesthetist.

R.A. GORDON

SEDATION, LOCAL AND GENERAL ANESTHESIA IN DENTISTRY. 3rd ed. NIELS BJORN JORGENSEN and JESS HAYDEN, JR. Toronto, Macmillan of Canada, 1980. Price \$34.50.

THIS BOOK being in its third edition in 13 years would appear to be something of a standard text for dentists. Its format and content remind one somewhat of the classic by MacIntosh and Bannister which was one of the few anaesthesia texts available in the forties. As might be expected, the part dealing with local blocks in and around the face and mouth is well done and beautifully illustrated in a way that even the novice would likely be successful if he followed the descriptions to the letter. The same unfortunately cannot be said for much of the rest of the book which is too sketchy to be more than a general guide. One would hope that those intending to practice general anaesthesia and those who use potent sedatives would have a more profound knowledge of the subject, and that they would use this book only "to whet their appetite" for deeper study and practical experience under competent guidance.

The book is well produced, but the style of writing is in part clumsy. It would appear that "the individual who is phobic with regard to dentistry" is one who is "afraid" of it. Then why not say so? Few anaesthetists would still subscribe to the concept of "major" and "minor" general anaesthesia which has long been abandoned as being inappropriate and indeed dangerous. It is a pity that dental teaching still persists in it.

Except perhaps for the chapter on the technique of local dental blocks, this book has nothing to offer the medical anaesthetist. Its overall value to dentists this reviewer is not competent to judge.

GORDON M. WYANT

TRENDS IN INTRAVENOUS ANESTHESIA. J. ANTONIO ALDRETE AND THEODORE M. STANLEY (eds.). Chicago Year Book Medical Publishers, 1980.

THERE HAS BEEN a major impetus in recent years to develop new intravenous anaesthetics, likely prompted by concerns with environmental pollution from inhalation agents. Most of these new developments have taken place in Britain and in Continental Europe, and most of the newer agents are either not generally known in North America or entirely unavailable. Consequently, a volume such as this in which the most recent intravenous anaesthetics are discussed side by side with some of the older ones, is timely and instructive for those who have been unable to attend the International Symposium in Denver, Colorado last year on which this volume is based. So rapid is the development in the field of intravenous anaesthetics that some of the information provided is already out of date, as for instance the discussion on "Minaxolone", clinical testing of which has since been suspended.

The book is well produced on excellent paper, sturdily bound and has a good index. Of particular interest are the self-evaluation quiz which follows each chapter and which makes the book of particular importance to those preparing for examinations. This book is of interest to every practicing anaesthetist and should be part of every departmental library.

GORDON M. WYANT