Book Reviews

The Liver

Felicity Hawker, London: W B Saunders Ltd., 1993, pp 410. \$35 (Cdn) ISBN 0-7020-1660-8

It is indeed the exceptional book that merits unreserved recommendation; this is such a book. The Liver is written by an intensivist primarily for intensivists but should be very useful to anaesthetists, internists and surgeons. It contains the accumulated knowledge of one individual, presented with detailed documentation, and enlivened with the author's personal experience.

The Liver is divided into ten chapters, the first two detail anatomy, physiology and biochemistry, and liver function tests. The latter is a very comprehensive discussion of liver function tests replete with comprehensive information and bibliography that should be useful for both clinical and research studies. Three chapters discuss fulminant, chronic liver disease, and liver abnormalities in systemic diseases and pregnancy with an excellent review of the theoretical and practical aspects of the causes of these abnormalities and their management. These are supplemented by a chapter that discusses critically ill patients with abnormal liver function tests: a very pertinent topic in critical care that emphasizes the impact of abnormal liver function on other vital organs. There are also two chapters addressing liver trauma, and liver disease in children.

The two best chapters, from an anaesthetist's point of view, discuss current problems in the management of liver transplantation and the impact of drugs on liver function. These contain the most practical new information. It is heartening to find a detailed and practical section on liver transplantation, with a detailed discussion of the preoperative and intraoperative anaesthetic management and, for the intensivist, there is a detailed review of postoperative care.

This is a jewel of a book that contains very current information; the publishers and the author are to be congratulated for bringing the book to print in such a short time. The information is current and the bibliography is up to date. Although the book is primarily directed to intensivists, anaesthetists, whether they are staff or residents, should find this book very useful.

W. DeMajo MD FRCPC
Toronto, Ontario

Principles of Anesthesiology: General and Regional Anesthesia, 3rd ed. (2 vol.)

Vincent J. Collins, Baltimore: Lea & Febiger, 1993, 1659 pp. \$258.25 (Cdn) ISBN 0-8121-1322-5

The third edition of Principles of Anesthesiology is a two-volume series divided into concerns of general and regional anaesthesia. The author's original concept was that of a single anaesthesia text of single authorship. With the evolution of the third edition, the author has remained largely committed to the concept of single authorship; however he has invited various other experts in areas such as equipment, positioning, ambulatory care, neuroaxial opioids and monitoring to contribute.

This edition differs from the other widely popular tomes of anaesthesia in that historical and developmental concepts with regards to all aspects of anaesthesia are widely described and extensively referenced. There are chapters on topics such as Hypnosis, Acupuncture, Climate, Attitude and Anaesthesia, Electroanaesthesia, that one is less likely to find in the more standard texts utilized for studying by trainees. What is not supplied by this edition is the physiological and pharmacological background to anaesthetic practice as it has evolved. As noted by the author in the Preface, a third volume dealing with such topics is underway.

The strengths of this edition are in its completeness of coverage regarding all aspects of general and regional anaesthetic techniques. It leaves a giant gap with respect to the underlying physiological and pharmacological principles. This information must be sought from other sources. I would recommend this edition as a supplementary referral text for departmental libraries, but not as a primary text book for anaesthetists in training.

Anne Moore MD FRCPC
Montreal, Quebec