

ABSTRACTS

Editorial Comment: Material for this section is not abstracted in a uniform style. Many employ direct quotations only. Others are written in the more conventional form. In this issue, for the first time, there are included a few opinions, personal to the abstractor, which where they appear, are either bracketed or labeled "Comment." The Editorial Office continues in its desire to receive correspondence from readers relative to the management of this section.

McCULLOCH, J. F.: *Spinal Anaesthesia in the Australian Imperial Force: a Report of 494 Cases at 2/1 Australian General Hospital.* M. J. Australia I: 527-533 (June) 1943.

"[In] A series of 494 cases of spinal anaesthesia with a 1 in 1,500 solution of 'Percaine' . . . there were no deaths. In 3.6 per cent of cases severe headache occurred and in 1 per cent pulmonary complications, mostly minor; there were two cases of serious sphincteric disturbance (one possibly not due to the anaesthesia), two cases of vomiting lasting up to twenty-four hours, and two cases of severe backache. No case gave rise to any anxiety in the operating theatre. Of the total number of patients, 6.6 per cent were given some adjuvant to the anaesthesia, most commonly morphine administered intravenously. One hundred and sixteen patients had had some form of inhalation anaesthesia previously and therefore some standards of comparison. Of these 85 per cent decided in favour of spinal anaesthesia if confronted with the necessity of further surgical operations. One case of 'failed' spinal anaesthesia . . . [occurred]. Safe and satisfactory anaesthesia with a 1 in 1,500 solution of 'Percaine' can be used for a wide range of surgical procedures under conditions which obtain in a military hospital of this type. The value of this preparation is none the less because almost all the patients were males in

good physical condition, as distinguished from a wider range of age, sex and clinical condition such as would be met with among patients in civil practice. 10 references.

J. C. M. C.

WATSON, T. P.: *Post-spinal Anaesthetic Headache.* Canad. M. A. J. 49: 12 (Aug.) 1943.

"The patient, a female of twenty years, was admitted to undergo an emergency appendectomy. . . . A spinal anaesthetic was administered, using nupercaine, 1:1,500 solution, with the Etherington-Wilson technique and the patient postured for 35 seconds following administration of 12 mil. of the drug. . . . Following the operation the patient complained of a frontal headache, which did not respond to treatment with aspirin and codeine tablets in horizontal position, nor the application of an ice-bag. The headache subsided when patient heard that she was to be discharged from hospital. This case was presented as an example of a case of post-spinal headache having a psychoneurotic origin. . . . In the prophylaxis of post-spinal headache the following points are of importance: (1) The use of a small needle will obviate the possibility of spinal leakage. (2) Careful follow-up of patients. The incidence is found to vary with carefulness of follow-up. (3) Psycho-therapy to induce a proper attitude toward the procedure in the patient's mind.