

BOOK REVIEWS

The Comparative Anatomy and Physiology of the Larynx. By V. E. NEGUS, M.D. With a foreword by Arthur Keith. Cloth, \$6.50. Pp. 230, with 191 illustrations. New York, Grune & Stratton, Inc., 1949.

Dr. Negus is one of the foremost men in the field of laryngology. His previous book, a ponderous volume, has been condensed and modernized in this smaller edition. The photographs and drawings, however, have been increased rather than decreased. This is an invaluable book by an author of outstanding abilities.

A comprehensive comparison of the larynx of man to that of the lower forms of animal life is given. The reader finds that the laryngocele of man is comparable to the ventricular air sacs of animals and also that the larynx of lower animals is not nearly as tilted as in man. Since the human embryo goes through some of the lower forms of life and may be arrested anywhere in its development, the practical application of comparative studies can be seen. The degeneration of parts of the larynx for use by man and its advantages and disadvantages in respiration and phonation are discussed thoroughly. For instance, the deer, a swift animal, respire through a less obstructed system than man, a comparatively slow animal. A discussion of the human larynx is given in the latter chapters of the book, and the anatomy and physiology of this important organ are discussed.

The diagrams and photographs are plentiful and well displayed. There is no attempt to confuse the reader with numerous labels on each figure.

Except for passages in which the author necessarily must use technical descriptions, this book is easily readable. The paper used is overly glossy and reflects too much light in almost any position.

For the anesthesiologist, laryngologist and those interested in the larynx, both from the standpoint of respiration and phonation, this book offers numerous advantages for interesting study and thought.

ROBERT BRAZY, M.D.

Anesthesia in Dental Surgery. By STERLING V. MEAD, D.D.S., M.D. Cloth, Price \$12.50. Pp. 648 and 244 illustrations. Ed. 2. St. Louis, C. Mosby Company, 1951.

This book by a former President of the American Dental Association not only is a text and reference work presented in accurate, scientific language understood by the dentist, but serves as a bridge between the cloistered physician anesthetist and the dental surgeon who frequently calls upon him for assistance.

The requirements of dental surgery cannot be compared with the needs of general surgery of the abdomen, thorax, brain or heart. For the patient who is to undergo a general surgical procedure the requirements of time, cost and postoperative effects of anesthesia are not of primary concern. The fact that the anesthetist exists for the benefit and at the call of the patient is often obscured in contact with these patients and in the habit of compliance with the apparent requirements of the operative procedure.

Regardless of the pathologic condition involved, the public considers

dental surgery a minor issue to be undergone at a time convenient to the patient, at a satisfactory economic level and without postoperative embarrassment. In the field of dental surgery, this relationship is made clear hundreds of thousands of times a year.

In his book Dr. Mead indicates how this demand has been and is being met with safety and with satisfaction. His treatment of the problem is scholarly, logical, lucid and entertaining. His discussion opens with a general statement in which he stresses the problem of teaching and of research in dental anesthesia.

The anesthesiologist teaching in a University and the chief of a hospital anesthetic service would do well to study carefully the problem of education presented in this book. Candor may suggest that the thoughtful diffusion of knowledge of and experience with anesthesia which such men may possess not only is a duty but may do more to enhance the specialty than will a policy of segregation and universal preoccupation with ultra-scientific research of questionable clinical value. In a period of thirty-five years Dr. Mead has employed nitrous oxide and oxygen in 300,000 cases with but one fatality and in five years has anesthetized 35,000 to 40,000 patients without a death. The routine anesthetic technics employed by an anesthesiologist with this experience cannot be ignored.

The author has divided his text into two major headings, local and general anesthesia. Under each he discusses history, anesthetic agents, technics, armamentarium and sequelae. Each chapter has an extensive bibliography. The illustrations (half-tones and line drawings) are well executed and illuminating.

This reviewer considers the treatment of the controversial "History of General Anesthesia" a model of ac-

curate chronologic detail, fairness and good judgment. The author's breadth of vision in handling this situation brought out by his comparison of William T. G. Morton and Christopher Columbus. Although others won and deserved priority, these two men are given historical credit. The author's preferences are advanced with vigor but with the consideration for others which is found only in men of good will.

One note pervades this book—the safety of the patient. It explains the author's clinical success and the acceptance of his organized efforts by the public. The text indicates that agents and technics employed were designed to this end. When conflict developed that is, when the continued use of an agent or technic increased the existing hazard, it was immediately abandoned for something safer. Physician anesthetists who are subject to the surgeons' and the patients' preoperative demands do not always have this freedom. The implication suggested is that the surgeon should be informed and educated in the limitations of the anesthetic agents and technics which has prescribed.

The dentist who fails to acquire this book will deprive himself of a valuable text which he may require in an emergency and a priceless reference work which he may peruse at leisure.

The physician anesthetist who does not familiarize himself with its contents loses an opportunity to broaden his normal field of activity and to secure a most convenient form technical information not readily available elsewhere.

Dr. Mead has demonstrated in the academic and clinical work the need for mutual respect and consideration between the fields of medicine and dentistry.

PALUEL J. FLAGG, M.D.