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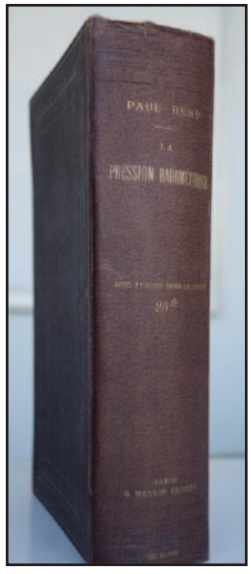
ANESTHESIOLOGY REFLECTIONS FROM THE PIERRE VIARS MUSEUM

Paul Bert: From Physiology to Barometric Pressure



Paul Bert (1833–1886) was a French physiologist and a politician (he founded with Jules Ferry the public, nondenominational, and obligatory school). In 1878, he published a book on his barometric pressure research. He demonstrated that bubbles, which kill animals during decompression accidents, contain nitrogen and carbon dioxide. He also studied the toxicity of high pressure oxygen on the central nervous system—the so-called Paul Bert effect. This book (1,161 pages) was a classical reference book for divers, submariners, and aeronauts. The *Paul Bert Prize* was created by both the National Space Agency (NASA) and the American Society of Physiology to reward research in space physiology.

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