CORRESPONDENCE

AN UNUSUAL COMPLICATION AFTER STELLATE GANGLION BLOCK

Sir,—Dr. Magora’s letter (Brit. J. Anaesth., 1964, 36, 601) states: “Only a small amount (about 1 ml of the total amount) was injected into another site when the patient moved.” In reviewing his original article, neither I nor my partner can find any reference to the injection of “about 1 ml of the total amount.” If only a total of 1 ml of lignocaine had been injected, then Dr. Magora’s point is well taken. But more than 1 ml was injected. I still believe this reaction describes an epidural injection. There is no real proof that the 1 ml caused the complication—it could have been the other 9 ml.

DANIEL C. MOORE
Seattle

INTERMITTENT POSITIVE PRESSURE VENTILATORS AND THE BOSUN OXYGEN WARNING DEVICE

Sir,—We would like to draw the attention of readers to a serious danger that exists when the Manley intermittent positive pressure ventilator is used in conjunction with the anaesthetic machine fitted with a Bosun oxygen warning device.

Drs. Hurter and Williams (1964) of the Orpington Hospital, Kent, have already drawn attention to this, but we feel that not enough publicity has been given to so serious a matter.

We also have discovered that the use of the Manley ventilator renders the oxygen warning whistle inoperative, presumably due to a build up of pressure from the respirator back to the rotameter head during the expiratory phase. It appears that 3 lb. pressure is required for the efficient working of the Bosun whistle, and as there is a back pressure of 14 lb. from the Manley ventilator during the expiratory phase, this renders the Bosun inoperative. It may be that other intermittent positive pressure respirators operated by the pressure of anaesthetic gases will produce similar undesirable results, although on testing the Barnet respirator we did not find this to be so. Further investigation with a view to rectification of a potentially most hazardous situation is urgently required.

In view of the previous reliability of the Bosun device, and the reliance which anaesthetists may have adopted towards it, we hope you will give this letter maximum publicity.

Yours faithfully,

J. FRASER-JONES
A. VIVIAN JENKINS
E. THOMAS
Birmingham

REFERENCE


BOOK REVIEWS


To listen to polyglot symposia is seldom, save to those with special linguistic abilities, a very rewarding experience. However, we can be glad that this symposium was held, and that, thanks to Dr. Lassner, such an excellent English edition of its proceedings has been made available. The 16 participants, representing 12 countries from both sides of the Iron Curtain (something to be welcomed in itself), are all men of high repute in their special fields of psychotherapeutics and anaesthesia, and their contributions in this booklet are worthy of their reputations.

Too many of the previous publications on the subject of hypnosis have tended to perpetuate beliefs in the mystique of mesmerism; it is most refreshing to find that all the contributors unite in disclaiming magic, explain their aims and methods in simple language, and, although convinced of the value of hypnotic techniques, recognize the dangers which may beset the path of the too-enthusiastic. Since these dangers are real, it may be valuable to mention them here. The late Dr. Stokvis (Holland) points out that unfortunate results may occur with patients of hysterical personality or impending psychosis, while Dr. Raginsky (Canada) emphasizes that, since the personal relationship between patient and doctor is much deeper when hypnosis is used, any mishandling of the situation may cause serious difficulties. Proponents of hypnosis would do well to bear in mind the following remarks by Dr. Antitch (Yugoslavia), “It is a well-known fact that it becomes progressively easier to induce hypnosis with each repetition. It may become possible to induce it by a signal, even without the hypnotized person’s knowledge or against his will. In this way, the initial legitimate use may pave the way to possible abuse. There is also the danger of choosing a signal for the induction of hypnosis which may be encountered fortuitously.”

While there can be no doubt that the intelligent use of psychotherapeutic methods, in other words, of kind-