Indicators of Recovery of Neuromuscular Function

To the Editor — It was the American philosopher George Santayana who observed that “those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.”

I draw his words to your attention in response to the report by Kopman et al. and the Editorial comments that it stimulated in the March 1997 issue of Anesthesiology.

As one will see from the material enclosed, the observation that small doses of nondepolarizing muscle relaxants can have a profound and long-lasting effect on the ocular muscles is by no means new.

Nor do I claim any originality for the observation. Speaking from memory only, I think that interested readers will also find it mentioned in Draper and Whitehead’s classical report. They went much further than did Kopman et al. They submitted each other to total body curarization without sedation.

But as their names are associated with ‘Diffusion Respiration,’ the authors probably overlooked that report in their own search of the literature.

C. Stanley Jones, F.R.C.A.
Unit D4
Helen Keller Park
P. O. Box 38683
Pinelands, 7430
South Africa

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Aaron F. Kopman, M.D.
Pamela S. Yee, B.A.
George G. Neuman, M.D.
Department of Anesthesiology
St. Vincent Hospital
Room NR408
153 W. 11th Street
New York, New York 10011
akopman@aol.com

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