The Anesthesiologist’s Bookshelf

Edited by HUBERTA M. LIVINGSTONE, M.D.


The purposes of this book are “an objective study and concise source of reference, as distinct from a work based on emotion, idealism or political theories.” The preface states “It is more than likely that the medical professions of North America will—in the not too distant future—find themselves in the front line of the ideologic battle between the planned and the free societies.”

The problems in Germany and Austria, U.S.S.R., Great Britain, New Zealand, Australia and Sweden are presented. Part Two considers appraisals, patient-doctor relationship, malingered, distribution of physicians, vital and disease statistics, social and economic status, medical emigration and medical research, while the final section contains “Conclusions.”

This detailed study is replete with data and references, is exceptionally well documented and appears purely analytical and impartial. Only in the conclusions do the authors show objection to socialized medicine. They did so on the merits and demerits of planned medical services or state medical planning for medical care, in contrast to free enterprise. They state on page 411, “Socialized medical systems have not solved the problem of distribution of physicians—either specialist or generalist.” “The system which appears to show the greatest waste and inefficiency is the completely socialized one of the U.S.S.R.” On the next page “Indeed, there is more than a suggestion that the State systems result in inferior medical care and inferior health statistics. Most surprising of all perhaps, is the fact that socialized medicine appears to fail most in the very field on which its most sanguine claims are based, i.e., preventive medicine.” On page 417, “No longer can it be concealed or doubted that the totally planned societies have failed in fulfilling basic human aspirations and needs; they have failed in all sectors—with one exception, i.e., the ability to threaten freedom.” They further point out that planning to be efficient would have to eliminate human factors, anticipate economic changes, foresee the changes in medical practices and require the patient’s acceptabilities to these changes.

On page 421, one reads, “In the preceding chapter, we have observed that the ideal society is one whose members are free, educated and economically self-sufficient to the point that they can purchase with discrimination on an open market all the goods and services of which they have need.” “In such a society, liberty and responsibility, measure for measure, are the hallmarks of the good citizen and incentives and encouragement should be the guiding principles upon which all social measures are based.” The authors add that those who can care for themselves should be encouraged to do so. This includes foresighted measures as protections. Only when unfortunate minorities have adverse situations does this permit society’s support. This protection and aid by the total group of society must be assured. It is projected that these unfortunate people would constitute roughly 5 per cent.

This book is recommended enthusiastically for all people in medical science, to acquaint themselves with the social, economic and political problems of the day, and also for sociologists, economists and educators, in order that these leaders have the facts and resource to references. This is a scientific study thoroughly inclusive, impartially written, and listed as most reading for all those who want facts.

H. Close Heseltine, M.D.


This book contains an unusually interesting collection of long out of print writings of Joseph Priestley, carefully selected from lectures, essays, memoirs and letters now in possession of the Pitt Library of the Pennsylvania State University. The amazingly diversified scope of interests, tremendous drive, extensive knowledge, strong convictions, philosophical acumen, penetrating insight, and investigatory ability of this outstanding scholar, scientist, educator and religious leader are revealed in this fascinating publication. The reader is exposed to a rich historical review and timely educational philosophy. His writings are replete with profound pronouncements pertaining to human nature, art, government, education and a multitude of other disciplines. A wealth of vital facts and sound theories are most attractively presented.
Joseph Priestley is of concern to anesthesiologists and other scientists because of his association with John Canton and Benjamin Franklin, his discovery of oxygen which he termed "dephlogisticated air," and his contributions to the understanding of electricity. Accounts of these investigations appear in this publication.

Although many readers will disagree with some of Priestley's religious beliefs, they will be moved by the sufferings of this English liberal who experienced destruction of his home, library and laboratory in the Birmingham riots of July 14, 1791. Theretofore he settled in Northumberland, Pennsylvania, and continued his writing and intense interest in the American experiment in democracy. Many truths he expounded are applicable today.

This attractive publication gives delightful insight into the life and works of an amazing individual, and makes superb reading for any thoughtful adult. This book is a valuable addition to any library.

HIBERTA M. LIVINGSTOE, M.D.


This second edition of a book, which appeared originally nine years ago, is a handsome volume composed of sections written by 50 anesthesiologists of the United States and Canada. It may be said fairly to represent present opinion, philosophy and practice of anesthesia in North America. Emphasis throughout is upon those factors conducive to safety for the patient in management of the total anesthetic experience. To this end basic principles of physiology and pharmacology are discussed, not only in chapters devoted to them, but also in each section specifically as they apply to the subject at hand. Descriptions of methods and technique are definite, practical and understandable. For these reasons the book is particularly recommended to teachers and students, although it is a valuable addition to the library of any anesthesiologist.

An especially fine feature of the book is the excellent list of references at the end of each chapter. Photographs, drawings and diagrams used to illustrate the text are clear and well reproduced.

JULIA C. ARROWOOD, M.D.

Practical Anesthesiology. By JOSEPH F. ARTUSIO, Jr., M.D., Professor of Anesthesiology in Surgery and Professor of Anesthesiology in Obstetrics and Gynecology, Cornell University Medical College, New York City, and Anesthesiologist-in-chief, The New York Hospital, Cornell Medical Center, New York City, and VALENTINO B. MAZZIA, M.D., Professor and Chairman of the Department of Anesthesia, New York University School of Medicine and Postgraduate Medical School, New York City, Visiting Physician in Charge of Anesthesia, Bellevue Hospital. Cloth. $7.75. Pp. 318, with 28 illustrations. The C. V. Mosby Co., St. Louis, 1962.

This book has a peculiar telegraphic style which, combined with a limited number of illustrations, is not conducive to easy reading. Its forty-three chapters are organized into five parts which are labeled "Basic Considerations" (including physiology and pharmacology), "Pre-Anesthetic Considerations," "Anesthetic Considerations," "Techniques of Administration" and "Special Considerations." Especially notable is a well-developed chapter on endotracheal intubation. Although halothane is discussed under both new and old agents, its treatment seems surprisingly limited in view of its more than five years' general use in what are reported to be millions of cases. The suggested reading lists at the end of the chapters refer in most instances to other books or review material from the American portion of the literature, but classic original articles are often omitted. This book provides insufficient detail to qualify as a reference guide but more than is usually found in an introductory outline, albeit the information given is somewhat fragmented and superficial in many areas. Perhaps the apparent lack of cohesiveness reflects the authors' stated intention to address the book not only to physicians and medical students but also to nurse anesthetists which is, in this reviewer's opinion, an unrealistic and undesirable combination.

LUCIEN E. MORRIS, M.D.


The author has written this small manual with several specific objectives. He hopes the book will be useful for the anesthetist or house officer who only occasionally carries out nerve block and also for candidates preparing for examinations. For the latter purpose it provides an excellent review. It would also be helpful to anyone experienced with nerve blocks who wished to review a seldom used technique. This reviewer feels there are too few illustrations to guide anyone who performs only an occasional block.

The book outlines the technique for most of the more common nerve blocks and gives their indications. In order to keep the book a practical size for quick reference, the author presents just one technique for each block. There are ten pages devoted to chemical structure and pharmacological properties of the most widely used drugs, and there is a short chapter for those who wish more detailed information.