Department of Reviews and Abstracts

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Selected Abstracts

Fetus and Newborn

Bartram: The Interpretation of Fetal Heart Sounds. Zeitschrift für Geburtshülfe und Gynäkologie, 1921, lxxxiv, 34.

The author accepts the prevailing opinion that slowing of the fetal heart rate during labor is due to decreased placental respiratory interchange during the pains—particularly the expulsive pains. This leads to an increased carbon dioxide content of the fetal blood with vagus and vasomotor stimulation, causing a decrease in the heart rate and increase in blood pressure. The significance of uncomplicated acceleration is still under dispute, notably Seitz claims that it should not be considered a sign of asphyxia, yet acceleration following a period of slowing is rightly considered a most serious symptom and is probably due to vagus paralysis. In certain cases the slowing may be due to direct brain compression, whether by the pelvis, rigid maternal soft parts or instruments. In some of these cases the compression may be only transient with a later return to a normal status. In others a state similar to concussion of the brain in adults may give rise to transient cerebral symptoms for some days after birth, though respiration is normally established at birth. In certain of these cases of transient asphyxia, premature respiratory efforts in utero may result in the aspiration of so much mucus that resuscitation of the child is impossible, though its intrauterine heart activity may seemingly have been reestablished at a normal level.

MARGARET SCHULZE.

Bylicki, L: Contributions to Fetal Biology. Gynécologie et Obstétrique, 1921, iv, 541.

The author gives a short consideration of the mechanism of deglutition in the fetus. He thinks the naso-pharyngeal cavity becomes filled with amniotic fluid and that the fluid is swallowed and replaced by other fluid. He also speaks of the aspiration by the fetus of amniotic fluid. He considers it especially from the standpoint of asphyxia in the newborn. Since we do not find amniotic fluid in the respiratory passages of the newborn, he considers unnecessary some of the customary maneuvers for the resuscitation of the newborn. F. L. ADAIR.

Ganssle: Sex Determination and War. Zeitschrift für Geburtshülfe und Gynäkologie, 1922, lxxxiv, 159.

The author reviews the theories of the transmission of sex and the numerous explanations offered for the ordinarily slight preponderance of male children over female children at birth. He refers to the well-established idea that many more male children are born during and immediately following a war, and analyzes the various factors which have been supposed to exert some influence, such as age and parity of the mother, nutritional conditions, etc. He finds, how-