

BOOK REVIEW

FETAL GROWTH RETARDATION—
Edited by F. André Van Assche and
William B. Robertson, publishers—
Churchill Livingstone Inc. 19 West 44th
Street, New York, N.Y. 10036-£20.00.

It is always a pleasure to read a good book and an easy task to write a review of it. *Fetal Growth Retardation* edited by F. André Van Assche and William B. Robertson is such a monograph contributed by about 60 specialists in Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Pediatrics, Pathology, Physiology, Endocrinology, Metabolism, Vascular Research, Medicine, Veterinary Medicine and related fields. This monograph is a compilation of the articles presented in the Symposium held in Leuven, Belgium in 1980. The contributions ranged from bio-chemistry, physiology, nutrition, metabolism, pathology and experimental studies to clinical studies and epidemiology.

Fetal Growth Retardation remains an outstanding problem in obstetrics and in Neonatology, both in the developed and developing countries. Marcel Renaer in his foreward has rightly mentioned "Two out of three babies who died in the perinatal period were either born too soon, or born too small, or born too soon and too small". Understanding of such facts has given birth to the concept of intra-uterine growth retardation—the subject of this monograph and finding means to reduce the incidence of such condition is the aim of such deliberations.

The monograph is divided into six parts. First part deals with foetal meta-

bolism which is rather a comparative physiological approach. Second part deals with foetal growth and growth retardation mainly concentrating on epidemiological aspect, effect of nutrition on foetal growth, socio-economic factors associated with foetal growth, variations in foetal growth and fate of neonate who is small for gestational age.

Third part deals with utero-placental blood supply and its pathology, placental malfunction as a factor in intrauterine growth retardation and effects of hypertension disorders and chronic nephritis in pregnancy on foetal growth.

In the fourth part rather unusual emphasis has been given on role of Insulin on foetal growth through six articles although no attempt has been made anywhere in the present monogram to highlight the recent advances in the diagnostic parameters of I.U.G.R. namely, biochemical, endocrinological, enzymic, placental function tests, study of amniotic fluid and ultrasonic investigation.

Fifth part of the monograph is mostly the outcome of fundamental research on environmental factors influencing the intra-uterine growth of animals and man.

Sixth or concluding part deals with some clinical problems related to intra-uterine growth retardation main in questionnaire form mainly concerning the optimum time of delivery in such condition. In this section simply the opinion of 19 participants of whom 13 were obstetricians, 4 neonatologists and 2 physicians

are documented on various clinical problems of intra-uterine growth retardation e.g. time of interference, method of delivery, roles of amniocentesis and place of caesarean section in the management of I.U.G.R. Surprisingly, none of the participants in the Symposium contributed an authentic article on such contradictory and debatable subject like management of I.U.G.R. both in antenatal and intranatal period.

The print is clear and is not broken into two columns. Paper and binding are most satisfactory.

This monograph may be highly recommended to all the specialists interested in the clinical problem of Intrauterine Growth Retardation.

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