

## BOOK REVIEWS

**MATERNAL RESPIRATION IN LABOUR**—An initial comparative study of the effects of various ante-natal training programmes. By R. St.J. Buxton, M.B., B.S., Ph.D., D.C.H. Written for the O.A.C.P. Price 2/-.

Unfortunately many of the "systems" of training for childbirth have become labelled, chiefly on account of the variations of breathing techniques employed during labour. Each exponent or disciple has been convinced that his or her method was superior to all others. According to their personal powers of persuasion, influence has been brought to bear on the medical profession, the antenatal teachers and the mothers-to-be in turn, and a lot of confused thinking, bias and jealousies have ensued.

However, antenatal training is now emerging from its initial and historic phase and it is imperative that it be prepared to present itself for scientific review and investigation. It is therefore a great pleasure to write a critique on this work of research on maternal respiration in labour.

During this 2-year project, mothers who had been trained in the techniques of three well known methods were under investigation, and a fourth group who had had no training was used for comparison. The breathing patterns were recorded, and an analysis made of the alveolar and blood gas samples. Arising out of the synthesis was the conclusion that the psycho-physical technique was the superior method. I must be forgiven for taking a particular interest in this point since this mode most nearly approximates my own practise. The report recommends that further modification of this technique is required to obviate the tendency for the patient to hyperventilate under stress.

The importance of this project cannot be sufficiently emphasized and we are grateful to Dr. Buxton and the O.A.C.P. for their contribution and hope that it is but the forerunner of many more.

Rosemary Harte, M.C.S.P.

**THE WHEELCHAIR BOOK: Mobility for the Disabled**—by H. L. Kamenetz, M.D. Publisher Charles C. Thomas. 301-327 East Lawrence Ave., Springfield, Illinois, U.S.A. 1969. 267 Illus. \$14.75.

This book is divided into three parts: Indoor vehicles for the disabled, wheelchairs, and wheelchair operation and training with appendices and a very adequate bibliography. Part one has an interesting history of wheelchairs through the ages. According to a recent survey there is one wheelchair to 677 individuals in the U.S.A. and in England and Wales the figure is one in 600. Walkers, stretchers, scooters, crawlers and lifting devices, e.g. hoists, are described with the pros. and cons. of different vehicles. Brief mention of the wheelchairs of the future such as "moonwalkers" and chairs operated by the patient's voice is made and perhaps a picture of the motorised chair operated by the quadriplegic's

chin could have been included for physiotherapists who have not yet had the joy of seeing these patients "whizzing" around the hospital and up and down slopes.

Part two is excellent and discusses the different types of wheelchairs, accessories and selection of wheelchairs. The majority of these are made in the U.S.A. but are familiar to us in South Africa. Little mention is made of the very robust wheelchair required, for example, by the African who is to use a wheelchair far away from a hospital workshop or supplier, but otherwise the adaptations are obtainable in South Africa. These chapters are most useful in that the advantages and disadvantages of the adaptations are mentioned in detail and are most helpful, however from one's own experience it is most difficult to advise a patient on the type of wheelchair most suitable for them in the home, work and sport or recreation situation. The assessment of the patient's requirements is not given in detail and one would wish for more guidance here, though one is advised to try out all the available wheelchairs.

Part three deals with chair operation and training, transfers, sports etc. and there is a useful chapter on the care of wheelchairs. The appendices deal briefly amongst other subjects, with clothing, travelling with the chair, there are useful hints.

This book is well produced and has many useful explicit illustrations and descriptions and emphasis is laid on function throughout. Each chapter is headed by quotations which may sometimes be irritating. This book should definitely be read by all who have anything to do with advising patients about wheelchairs and will be very useful in reference libraries for physiotherapists as there is plenty of useful advice for the student and the inexperienced for whom this book is most warmly recommended.

F. de B.

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