

Observations on the constitution of women, and on some of the diseases to which they are more especially liable.

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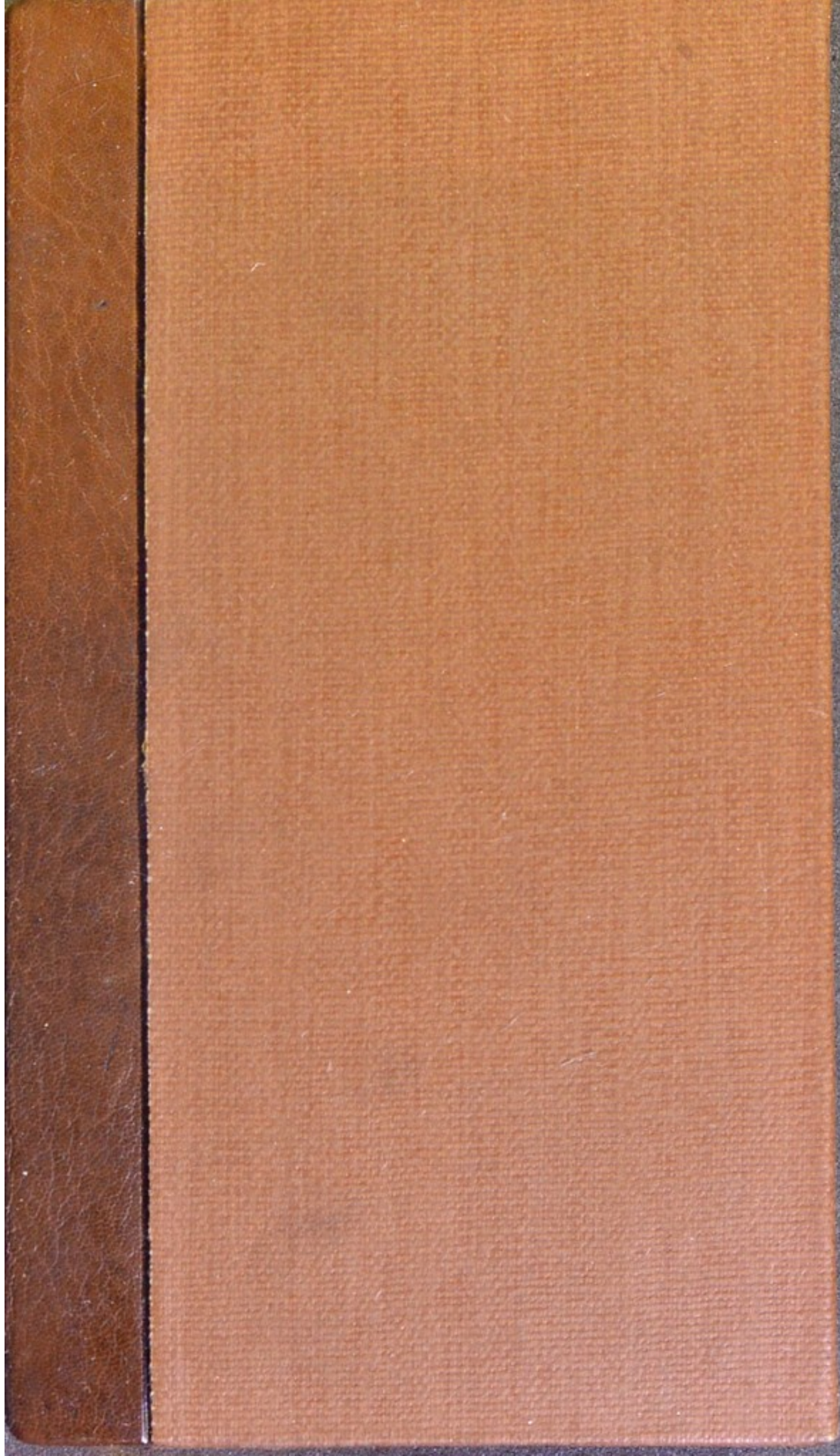
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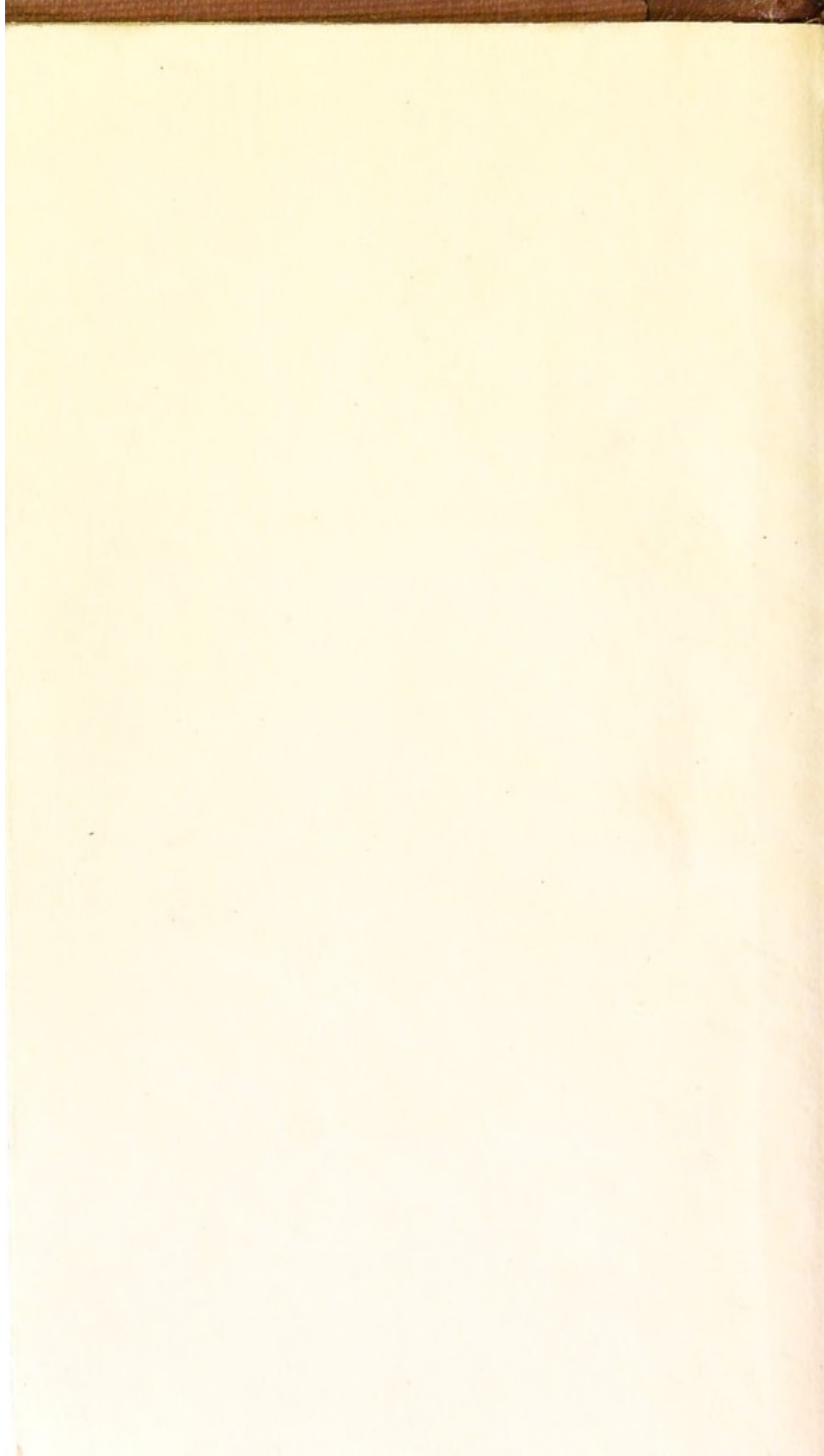


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OBSERVATIONS
 ON THE
 CONSTITUTION OF WOMEN,
 AND ON
SOME OF THE DISEASES

To which they are more especially liable.



BY SAYER WALKER, M. D.
 OF THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS, LONDON,
 Physician to the City of London Lying-in-Hospital,
 and to the City Dispensary.

Ex quibus conficitur, sexui potius fæminino, quam
 virili, de peculiari vivendi ratione, esse prospiciendum.

HOFFMAN.

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1803.

1877

CONSTITUTION OF THE

STATE OF

NEW YORK

AS REVISED

IN 1877

BY THE

LEGISLATURE

OF THE

STATE

OF

NEW YORK

IN

1877

P R E F A C E.



AS the diseases which are peculiar to women form a large and important object of medical attention, so every opportunity of obtaining the most accurate knowledge of their cause, symptoms, and cure, should be eagerly embraced.

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Having

Having been in the habit of a regular attendance on all the duties of the medical department in the City of London Lying-in Hospital for nearly nine years, a favourable opportunity has been afforded me of observing the various diseases connected with the puerperal state, in their commencement, progress, and termination.

During this period, several thousand women have been admitted; the care of whom, and of their children, in every disease under which they have laboured, has devolved upon me.

Very happily, the instances of mortality have been but few; but when an opportunity has occurred for inspecting a
body

body after death, I have not failed to avail myself of this advantage for a more minute investigation of the seat of the disease.

This public situation has been the occasion, also, of my being consulted on the various diseases which occur to females at the different periods of life; and consequently a large field of experience and observation has been opened, and an opportunity has occurred for viewing the different diseases, treated of in the following pages, on a very extensive scale.

With these advantages, I feel myself called upon to contribute my mite towards the improvement of a subject of so much

importance to a large part of the community.

As some erroneous opinions have been entertained, and some ill-founded prejudices have been imbibed, to correct the one and remove the other will be to render essential service to those who are particularly interested in this subject.

Whilst a large proportion of the diseases which are peculiar to women, are connected with the different functions of the uterus and its appendages, and are many of them attended with some irregularities of the menstrual discharge, it is not surprizing that others, though totally independent

independent of them, should yet be ascribed to the same cause.

Accordingly we find that, if the menses do not appear at the time of life at which they are usually expected, though in particular instances the constitution is not then prepared to produce them, every indisposition occurring at this period is attributed to the absence of them, and improper means are often employed, which lay a foundation for some future injury to the constitution, or to the organ particularly concerned.

The heating regimen too often employed during the puerperal state, and the frequent use of cordials and volatiles, with a view

to support and strengthen the patient under hæmorrhages, occurring at different periods, are also amongst those injudicious modes of treatment which I have endeavoured to correct.

If the frequent repetition of the caution on this subject should appear to the reader unnecessary or redundant, it is hoped that the impression made on my mind by the mischief which I have seen produced by this practice, will be admitted as an excuse.

The history of the different diseases comprizing the symptoms which have occurred to observation, not in a few solitary cases, but in a large number, so far

as the diagnosis is correct, may enable the junior practitioner, or those less conversant with this particular line of practice, to mark the difference, even in those cases where the symptoms of one disease bear a strong resemblance to those of another.

If these pages should be perused by the female invalid, she will see how much less reason there is to expect a cure by the use of some fancied specific, than by an attention to the advice of her medical friends, and by a strict adherence to the plan of diet and regimen which they may recommend.

It would have been an easy task to introduce particular cases as an illustration
of

of the opinions here advanced ; but it was thought more proper to give the general result of a large number, which, though they may differ in some particular circumstances, are found to agree in their characteristic symptoms.

If the following pages should be the occasion of correcting an erroneous practice, of removing any unnecessary apprehensions of danger from the mind of some patients, or of exciting a proper degree of caution in that of others, I shall have the satisfaction of having contributed something to the improvement and success of the profession, in which I am engaged.

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The Reader is requested to observe the following Erratum:

Page 10, line 11, before cease, read apparently.

ON THE
CONSTITUTION OF WOMEN.

AMONGST the numerous diseases to which the human body is exposed, there are some to which the female part of the species is exclusively liable. Though the general form of the body is nearly the same; though the organs by which the vital, and some of the animal and natural functions are carried on,

are similar; yet a difference in the conformation of parts, and in the degree of power with which the actions of the system are performed, is obvious to the common observer, and is particularly familiar to the medical practitioner. This difference, though it arises, chiefly, from original formation, may, in part, be attributed to diet and regimen, to modes and habits of life which nature has imposed, or custom prescribed.

The peculiarity of any constitution may be traced to the different combination of those parts, of which the body is originally composed.

The properties of the simple solid may
be

be varied by the degree of cohesion which takes place in it. The structure of the fibre may be affected by any change in the mixture, or aggregate, of which it is formed. The state of the cellular texture, interposed between the fibres, may be rendered more firm and dense, or more soft and yielding. As the body is composed of bone, muscle, cellular membrane, nerve, and other parts, so the different proportion of these will affect its general temperament. The arrangement and proportion of the solid parts, and of the circulating fluids, and more especially the state of the vital principle, as connected with the ner-

vous, or moving powers, must have a considerable influence in forming that variety which is observed in the human subject, and particularly, in constituting the difference of the male and female temperament. It may be remarked, therefore, that the lax fibre, the small and flaccid muscle, the delicate fabric of the nerves, the weak and yielding texture of the vessels, are some of the circumstances that unite in forming the constitution which is observed in the female.

With this state of the blood-vessels is connected the sanguineous temperament which more generally prevails amongst women; together with which, the soft
skin,

skin, the florid complexion, the fine and flexible hair, the small feature, and the slender limb, are all characteristic marks of female delicacy.

It has been a common observation amongst physiologists, that there is a striking resemblance between the general constitution of women and that of children. In the latter there is evidently a wise provision made by a soft and yielding texture for that evolution and growth, which are necessary in their progress to an adult state; and in the female constitution, besides the circumstances of growth, which are common to both sexes, there is a provision for that change of form and evolution

tion

tion of parts, to which, particularly, the mammary and uterine system are destined.

To that particular temperament by which women are distinguished, the offices which they hold, especially in civilized states and polished society, and the employments in which they are principally engaged naturally contribute. Whilst the rigid fibre, and the bold or swelling muscle, render men capable of more vigorous exertions, and more laborious occupations; and whilst such exercises, in return, enlarge and strengthen those parts of the body which are thus employed, the feeble exertions to which women are called, are better adapted to the more delicate
state

state of their organs. It is not surprising that, from the effect of long habit, as well as from original constitution, exercise, especially of the feverer kind, is in general attended with less pleasure to the female than to the male; or, that in the use of it, they sooner experience languor and fatigue.

The exercise of riding is generally preferred to that of walking, and travelling in a carriage is more agreeable than a journey on horseback. That there are exceptions to this rule is very certain. There are instances in which women exceed the men in corporeal strength and active exertion. Even in the sports of
the

the field, notwithstanding the severity of the exercise, and the danger to which it exposes, do they sometimes engage with great spirit and resolution. These, however, are rare instances, and do not affect the truth of the general observation.

With the constitution by which they are distinguished, and with those habits to which they are generally trained, women become very susceptible of impression by slight external causes, and are more liable than others to the influence of climate, to the changes produced by the temperature of the air, and to the effects of an unhealthy atmosphere.

The moving powers of their system are
more

more easily acted upon, and they are, consequently, more subject to those various affections which have been usually called nervous.

These affections, indeed, are not to be considered as exclusively the disease of women, since they sometimes fall to the lot of men: but their general constitution renders them the more frequent subjects of them.

Hysteria, for instance, is so common a complaint amongst women, and so seldom occurs to the other sex, that it has been considered as a disease peculiar to the female. Symptoms, indeed, very similar to those which constitute the hysterical paroxysm,

paroxysm, are sometimes felt; but the distinct paroxysm is very rarely experienced by men.

Syncope, or complete fainting, is another of those diseases which are most common to women, and which is much connected with the general temperament by which they are distinguished.

In this disease there is a weakened action of the heart, and the organs of respiration, or these functions, for a short time, ^{apparently} cease altogether. This is produced in some women by slight causes: the sight of a disagreeable object, the hearing of a melancholy tale, or any sudden surprize will,

in

in persons subject to this affection, almost constantly produce syncope.

For a more particular description of complaints usually termed nervous, and of the constitution and habits which give a predisposition to them, I must refer to the treatise which I published some years ago on the subject of nervous diseases.

Together with this susceptibility of impression on the bodily organs, is connected that sensibility of mind, which, when indulged in a proper degree, is a distinguishing ornament of the female.

The influence of bodily constitution on the affections and passions of the mind, and the influence of the latter on the
former,

former, are too obvious to need any direct proof.

Love, hope, and joy, when kept within proper bounds, gently excite the action of moving powers, promote an equable circulation of fluids, and conduce very much to a healthy state of the frame; whilst grief, fear, and despair enervate and depress, and introduce that train of evils into the body and the mind which make life itself a burden.

But these different passions will produce their effect on the constitution in proportion to the degree in which a susceptibility of impression prevails, for which reason
they

they may be supposed to have peculiar influence on the female.

This sensibility to mental impressions gives great advantage to women in the cultivation of those faculties which are usually distinguished by the terms taste and genius, and renders them capable of receiving a high degree of pleasure from the contemplation of the beauties of nature or art.

A taste and relish for these beauties are oftentimes combined with that taste for moral excellence, from which great advantages and considerable dignity are derived, and they are accordingly observed to excel
in

in the milder virtues of meekness and patience, compassion and tenderness.

With these is connected that strong affection for her offspring, particularly during the period of infancy, which so strikingly characterises the mother, and which renders those offices, that would otherwise be tedious and irksome, in the highest degree pleasant.

With these dispositions, also, she not only becomes the guardian of her children's health, but is admirably well qualified for the infinitely more important task of forming the infant mind;—a circumstance which confers the highest dignity upon the maternal character.

That

That these mental and moral qualifications are connected with that state of the animal frame which is peculiar to the female, is evident, since they generally prevail in the highest degree where the marks of the female constitution are the most striking.

As a farther peculiarity of this temperament, it may be proper to remark, that it is subject to a greater variety and more frequent changes than usually take place in that of the male. There is an alteration to which at different periods of life, and in the different progress of growth, both sexes are subject.

When passing from the state of infancy

to

to that of childhood, and from that of childhood to that of puberty, the body undergoes several alterations. The progress of growth is slower as we advance in life, and the proportion which different parts of the body bear to each other is also varied. The same variety also takes place in the direction of the fluids to different organs; the balance between the circulation through the arteries and veins is changed, and some of the vessels in advanced life become impervious, whilst others are more distended with blood. In the later stages of life the irritable principle also suffers considerable diminution.

In

In all these changes the female partakes with the other sex; but besides these, at the periods of menstruation, in the months of pregnancy, at the hour of parturition, during the season of lactation, and at the time when menstruation ceases, she is liable to other changes which are peculiar to herself.

It is sufficient to have just mentioned these, as we shall have occasion to take more particular notice of them in the observations which we shall now proceed to make upon the different diseases which are peculiarly incident to women.

ON THE MENSES.



AT the age of fourteen or fifteen, which, in this country, is the period of puberty, the peculiarities of the female constitution begin to discover themselves. At this time a change takes place in the form of the mammæ, as a preparation for the function which these organs are hereafter to assume.

In

In order to this, there is a determination of fluids to the part. Vessels are distended, and in this manner an increase of bulk, and a change of form are produced. During this process a degree of pain is frequently felt.— This, however, does not in general excite much attention, since it is considered only as one of the symptoms of a change which the constitution is now to undergo. It may not be improper, however, to observe that, in some cases, besides the general uneasiness, there is a sense of heat and pain similar to what is occasioned by the flow of milk to the breast soon after parturition. This may arise from the resistance

ance

ance of the vessels to the distension of their coats by the fluid sent into them; and, as the future state of this organ may depend upon the circumstances occurring during this change of its form, the neglect of a proper attention to them may prove of considerable consequence.

All unequal pressure, such as was formerly occasioned by the use of stays, should be carefully avoided. The diet should be rather of the mild and cooling, than of the heating and stimulating kind, and attention should be paid to the state of the bowels.

About the same period in which the affection of the breasts, now described,
takes

takes place, other symptoms of approaching menstruation occur. Pains in the loins, and in the region of the pubis, accompanied with a sense of weight and fulness, are amongst the first sensations that the patient complains of. Beside these, there is sometimes considerable pain in the head, attended with giddiness; the stomach is affected with nausea and want of appetite, and the feet and ancles swell towards night: but these symptoms, though troublesome while they continue, are soon succeeded and terminated by an appearance of the menses.

This discharge does not at its commencement observe very regular periods of
return,

return, but appears only once in two or three months, and afterwards oftener, till at last the habit of a regular monthly return is established.

This is a description of the change which usually takes place in the functions of the system at this period of life. But it often happens that the symptoms which have been described as introductory to the menstrual discharge, are not succeeded by it, and the patient is then liable to the disease called Chlorosis.

ON CHLOROSIS.

THIS disease is distinguished by the following symptoms, besides those which have been already mentioned: there is a great paleness of the countenance, particularly of the lips; excessive fatigue on very moderate exertion; a sense of fullness and oppression about the præcordia; swelling

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ing of the feet and ancles; quickness of breathing, particularly after going up stairs; frequent palpitations of the heart; a pulse weak and irregular; acid eruptions; and other signs of a debilitated state of the alimentary canal; together with evident deficiency of mental vigour.

It may be proper in this place to take notice that, besides this defect of menstruation at a time of life in which it usually occurs, there is frequently an interruption of it long after the time at which its periodical return was established.

In married women, this irregularity is generally supposed to arise from conception;

tion; but it may occur under other circumstances, to which single women are equally liable.

A suppression of the menses, whether it occur suddenly at the time of the discharge, or consist in a total absence of them, has been attributed to an obstruction or resistance in the extremity of the vessels of the uterus, which may be induced by a variety of occasional causes. The action of cold upon the system, some violent passions of the mind, the excess of fear, or any sudden surprize, may produce the effect. But though this disease may sometimes be idiopathic, it is often only a symptom of some other disorder prevailing

in the system, and may therefore be considered rather as the *consequence* than as the *cause* of many other complaints.

The general affections during a suppression of the menses are such as have been already enumerated; but besides those, it frequently happens, when this takes place as a primary disease, that it is attended with considerable enlargement of the abdomen, and great marks of fullness and distention of the vessels. We have, accordingly, in some instances, hæmorrhages during this state, either from the nose, from the stomach, or from the lungs.

After some long continued suppressions,
discharges

discharges from these parts have observed the monthly period with considerable regularity.

The medical treatment to be adopted in these cases must be regulated very much by the circumstances under which they occur. In those instances where the menstrual evacuation has never appeared, and where the symptoms of general debility, already described, prevail, it is necessary to give vigour and tone to the system, and to excite the action of those vessels which are employed in producing the discharge.

Whether there be any specific power in those articles of the materia medica

which have been celebrated as emmenagogues is very doubtful; but so far as they are adapted to give energy and tone to the general system, they may answer the purpose of producing that flow of the menses, the want of which constitutes the disease now under consideration.

With this view chalybeate medicines have been employed, either alone or in combination with other articles of a similar nature. That mode of combination which is contained in the formula prescribed by Dr. Griffiths is frequently adopted, and has often been used with considerable advantage.

It is proper, however, to remark that
when

when the disease occurs in a very full and vigorous habit, it is necessary to reduce this fulness by general or topical bleedings and other evacuations, previously to the use of tonic medicines. Moderate exercise, regularly continued, in the open air, will also contribute to the relief of the patient.

Not only is it of consequence to keep up a regular discharge from the bowels, but the occasional use of a brisk cathartic may, by its stimulus on adjoining viscera, produce an action in the uterine vessels.

In cases of *suppression*, which may, as before observed, arise from some resistance in the extremity of the uterine vessels, the

application of those remedies which are adapted to relax these vessels, and to take off this resistance, seems to promise the most relief. With this view, fomentations may be applied to the abdomen; or the patient may sit over some warm water; or, which will probably be still more effectual, she may make use of the semicupium. As an internal fomentation, the repeated use of emollient glysters may be had recourse to.

But these remedies, or any other which may be employed on these occasions, will be most efficacious if made use of at the period when the menses, if they had continued regular, might have been
expected

expected to flow, and when nature is making an effort towards the discharge.

Very nearly connected with a suppression of the menses is that PAINFUL MENSTRUATION to which some women are subject only occasionally, but which others experience on every return of the monthly period. This may probably have its origin in those causes to which a suppression of the menses has been assigned.

A treatment similar to what has been just recommended is proper in this case; but, if the pain become very urgent, the use of some anodyne remedy may be recommended, in addition to the other means

which have been prescribed in cases of suppression.

But, having pointed out the practice which is commonly useful on these occasions, we shall suggest a few observations on the importance of distinguishing between this disease and others to which it bears some resemblance.

As the symptoms which have been mentioned occur very frequently either previously to the first appearance of the menses, or in connection with some subsequent suppression, it is very natural to consider them as the consequence of this; but in some instances, at least, they may be viewed as indications of such a
state

state of the system, as constitutes rather the *cause* than the *effect* of retention or suppression.

As a proof of this it may be observed, that these symptoms, in some instances, have existed independently of any defect in the menstrual discharge, and have continued even when this has observed the most regular periods of return.

The medicines which have generally been employed in order to obviate retention, or remove suppression, have been such as are well adapted to relieve the symptoms just described, and it is on this account that some of them have been celebrated as powerful emmenagogues;

but, instead of possessing any specific virtues which should entitle them to this character, they produce their effects rather by their influence on the general habit, than by any immediate and direct action on the uterine system.

It may appear to some persons an inquiry of little or no consequence, whether the medicines referred to produce their effect in a more immediate or more indirect manner; but it must occur to the intelligent practitioner as a question of considerable importance, since upon this depends the propriety of exhibiting any medicine taken from a particular class.

The retention and suppression of the
menfes

menses arise from various causes, and occur under very different states of the system, for which reason the indiscriminate use of any medicine must, in some cases, prove injurious.

A very common practice, with patients labouring under this complaint, is, to fly immediately to the use of the most forcing medicines (as they term them), that may be presented to their notice in a public advertisement, as specific remedies for the particular disease under which they labour, or recommended by friends as what they have found useful in circumstances which they suppose to be similar.

It may be proper to observe in this place,

that too great a solicitude on the part of parents or friends to procure the appearance of the menses at a certain time of life, has led to the premature use of those very remedies which, under different circumstances, might have been useful. Numerous have been the instances in which this indiscriminate practice has proved injurious.

The hurried circulation which these means have produced, has occasioned the rupture of vessels in different parts of the body. Hæmoptoe, which has been referred to the retention of menses, might, in some cases, I am persuaded, with more propriety, be attributed to the use of stimulant
and

and tonic medicines, to electricity, and other means employed to procure them.

Even discharges from the uterus obtained in this way, so flattering to the hopes of the patient and her friends, and which obtain so much credit to the medicine prescribed, instead of being that salutary discharge which nature designs, are nothing less than hæmorrhages improperly excited, and which may lay a foundation for diseases of this organ in a remote period of life.

But if it be true that many of the symptoms of the disease under consideration, arise from different causes, as we have already observed, and are connected also
with

with other morbid affections, how great the hazard to which the patient is exposed, of aggravating the general disease whilst attempting to remove one of its symptoms.

The general appearance of a chlorotic patient seems to indicate that the constitution is not yet prepared to produce the menstrual secretion or discharge, and therefore, these methods of putting a force upon it may be productive of mischief.

For the medical practitioner to prescribe on a transient view of symptoms, without investigating their particular nature and cause, would expose him to the charge of unpardonable rashness; and if he, who is in the constant habit of seeing the disease

in

in all its forms and connections, find it necessary to summon all his powers of discrimination, in order to satisfy himself respecting the indications of cure, what must be the danger to which the patient is exposed by following the advice of the unwary and inexperienced.

But it may be asked—to what dangers we refer, to what diseases we allude, as complicated with that of which we are now treating. We might answer that, under the disguise of symptoms very similar to what we have described, we sometimes can discover the prognosis of a dangerous consumption. In the cough and quickness of breathing, in the irregularity

larity of the pulse, and in the palpitations of the heart, we can at other times discover something beyond a chlorotic symptom, and become suspicious of some primary disease in the functions or structure of the heart.

Where organs so important to life as the lungs and the heart are concerned, with what care and attention should they be watched; and when we remember that the plan usually adopted for the cure of chlorosis and amenorrhæa, is calculated rather to aggravate than to relieve the other morbid conditions of the system, now referred to, it becomes us to be

as accurate as possible in forming our diagnosis.

A frequent cough, a quick pulse, and difficulty of respiration, have been mentioned as symptoms usually attending a total absence, or unfrequent return of the menstrual discharge; consequently, it is not in the presence of these symptoms alone that we are to discover danger; but, if the cough, instead of being only occasional, be constant, accompanied with weight and pain in the chest, and an increased secretion of mucus, particularly in the morning; if, with the pallid countenance, there be a circumscribed spot of a florid colour in the cheek; if there be on the present

fent, or may have been on any former occasion, a spitting of blood; if not only debility, but emaciation attend these symptoms, there is certainly some occasion for alarm respecting the state of the lungs.

In forming our diagnosis we shall be assisted also by attention to general structure and general temperament, as giving pre-disposition to this disease. But as this affection of the lungs, for the most part, occurs at a later period than that in which the menses first appear, it is more commonly connected with the suppression than with the retention of them.

Palpitation of the heart we have seen is a symptom of these affections of the
uterine

uterine system, in common with diseases of the heart itself. In order to distinguish to what cause this is to be attributed, or with what condition of the constitution it is in any given instance more particularly connected, it will be necessary to attend to the circumstances under which it may occur. If it be observed only after using more than ordinary exercise, on any sudden surprize, or under the influence of some strong passion of the mind, it may be attributed to that irritability of the frame, which is a common attendant upon other symptoms of uterine affection; but if it be constant, if it be attended with an irregular and intermitting pulse, and
sudden

sudden apprehension of suffocation; if, instead of a merely pallid countenance, there be a livid colour in the cheeks and in the lips, indicating a difficult return of blood from the head; these are symptoms which should lead us to pause and guard against a hasty conclusion respecting the nature of the disease, and the mode in which it should be treated.

At the commencement of such a disease, much depends upon keeping the circulation within proper bounds, and avoiding all means of a morbid excitement of the system. Those medicines, therefore, which are usually employed for producing or
restoring

restoring menstruation must be highly improper.

To have hinted at this is sufficient for our present purpose without entering upon any directions respecting the treatment to be observed.

MENORRHAGIA

MENORRHAGIA.



AS connected with the subject of menstruation, it is proper to take notice of a disease which nosologists have distinguished by the term Menorrhagia, or an excessive discharge of the menstrual fluid. This excess may refer either to the quantity discharged at one time, or to the frequency

frequency of the return of this evacuation.

It is proper, however, to remark that it is not the quantity discharged, nor the frequency of the return, that is alone sufficient to constitute the disease.

In order to determine in what cases these are to be considered as morbid symptoms, it is necessary to observe how far the constitution is affected by them. In some patients, either from peculiarity of temperament, or from long habits, very copious discharges are produced without any evident injury to the general health; whilst in others, they are attended with considerable inconvenience.

If,

If, therefore, the patient do not complain of being much weakened, if the appetite continue good, and all the other functions of the system go on with tolerable regularity, it is better, in such an instance, not to interfere with nature's operations. If the patient, however, on the contrary, complain of great weakness, loss of appetite, or difficulty of digestion, through the debilitated state of the stomach; if she be subject to lowness of spirits, frequent tremors and faintings; if the feet and ancles become cold, and swell towards the evening, or if other signs of a reduced state of the system should appear, it is
necessary

necessary immediately to have recourse to some invigorating medicine.

In these cases, it is very common to expect relief from the use of wine or other warmer cordials. The lowness of spirits and the faintness which patients experience, naturally leads them to suppose that what gives the most immediate relief to these symptoms, must be the remedy from which a cure is to be expected; but it will generally be found that such means, instead of removing the cause, and proving a remedy, tend only to increase the disease.

If this hæmorrhagy be of the active kind, or be attended with a plethoric state of the system, the loss of a few ounces of

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blood

blood may be advisable; the propriety of this measure, however, must be determined by a minute attention to a variety of circumstance which occur, in particular cases, to the observation of the practitioner, and concerning which it is not possible to lay down any general rule which will apply to all cases.

The medicines prescribed on these occasions, should be taken from those classes of astringents and tonics which are the least adapted to increase the action of the arterial system, or to hurry the circulation of blood through the vessels. To moderate their action, and at the same time to give that tone which is necessary to resist

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the discharge taking place at their extremities, is the principal indication.

The fossil acids may often be used with advantage, either in their simple or combined state. Infus. rosæ may be taken, and sometimes nitre should be added to it. The acid, in combination with the aluminous earth, may be more proper than that with the chalybeate, especially where the hæmorrhage is of the active kind. The bark may be exhibited with advantage in some of these cases. Terra japonica and kino are also useful under proper management. Considerable caution is necessary in the use of anodynes. If the disease depend upon a plethoric state of the system,

or the discharge be kept up by the too great action of vessels, these may do mischief, especially if they are used too early, and previously to the vessels being emptied either by the use of the lancet, or the continuance of the evacuation from the uterine system.

During the continuance of this disease a cooling regimen and diet will be most proper. As medicine of the cordial and stimulating kind has been forbidden, as only tending to accelerate the circulation and increase the disease, so high seasoned food, wine, and spirits are, for the same reason, injurious. Upon the same principle, large assemblies, and heated rooms are to be avoided.

avoided. Violent exercise is improper, whilst that which is moderate should be encouraged. Riding in a carriage, or, if the habits of the patient admit of it, riding on horseback, is to be preferred to every other kind of exercise.

If, on any occasion, the patient should be attacked by fainting fits, exposing her to a current of fresh air, and the application of vinegar to the nostrils, will generally recover her; and this mode of relief is much to be preferred to the common practice, on these occasions, of pouring down some spiritous tincture or volatile drops.

FLUOR ALBUS.



THERE is another disease which is nearly connected with what we have now been treating of, and which has been distinguished by the name of Fluor Albus, Leucorrhœa, or the Whites. This is a discharge from the vagina, or uterus, of a serous, or puriform fluid, at
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first of a white colour, but afterwards assuming a yellow or greenish hue. This has been supposed, by some nosologists, to flow from the same vessels from which the menses proceed. It generally observes a periodical return, and appears at the time when the menses abate or cease, which circumstance gives the air of probability to the opinion that each fluid proceeds from the same source. Some of the symptoms of this complaint bear a near resemblance to those which have been related as attendant upon menorrhagia. But, besides those general symptoms of debility, there are some local inconveniences in the present disease.

After some continuance of this discharge, the patient complains of considerable heat of urine, and sometimes of a soreness, or even excoriation of parts, which renders exercise inconvenient. The general mode of treating this disease is very similar to that which is employed in Menorrhagia.

There is one cause of this disease which perhaps is not so commonly adverted to, a collection of fordes in the intestinal canal, which proves a source of irritation in the vicinity of the organs affected, and the removal of which is an important part of the cure.

To this conclusion I have been led by observing that, during a costive state of the
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body, the complaint has generally been aggravated, and that the discharge has been diminished in quantity, and altered in its quality, after the use of some cathartic remedies; so that, besides the application of some lotion to the parts, or the injection of some liquid which shall at once wash away or dilute the morbid secretion, and by a gentle astringency prevent a farther accumulation, it is also necessary to attend to the state of the intestinal canal, and remove every source of irritation which may exist in that part of the system.

That this complaint, or one very similar to it, affects children previously to the period of puberty, or the beginning of the men-

strual discharge, has not been generally noticed by writers on this subject; of this, however, I have seen numerous instances.

A discharge of a white mucus fluid from the vagina sometimes occurs within a few weeks after birth, but this generally disappears in a few days. At the age of three or four years it will sometimes return, and at the age of eight or ten it has been so considerable as to produce symptoms of debility, and, if neglected, becomes very troublesome and obstinate.

In these instances, I have found the disorder generally connected with a foul state of the bowels; the stools which have been procured have been highly offensive,
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and the discharge of them has been followed by a mitigation of symptoms.

The removal of this complaint is to be attempted in a manner similar to that which is employed in the Fluor Albus of women.

Besides the exhibition of an active cathartic, viz. pulv. basilic. or pulv. rhæi cum hydrag. muriat. mit. the application or injection of aq. lirtharg. acetat. properly diluted, may be necessary.

If the general habit be much affected, the use of internal remedies, similar to those employed in the other case, are very proper. If accompanied with uneasiness in the stomach, or symptoms of

acidity in the primæ viæ after the use of cathartics, the testacious powders may be employed. A light and nourishing diet may be prescribed, which, with moderate exercise in the open air, will tend to give tone to the constitution, and obviate the recurrence of this complaint.

ON THE
DISEASES OF ADVANCED LIFE.

THE diseases which occur in the more advanced stages of life might, according to the order of time in which they appear, be introduced after those which are connected with pregnancy and parturition; but as these form a part of

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the complaints to which single as well as married women are liable, they may be considered as connected with the diseases which have been already treated of.

The first change which takes place at the period referred to, is a

CESSATION OF THE MENSES.

When a woman arrives at the age of forty, or during the period between forty and fifty, the Catamenia commonly cease. This change is not, in general, very sudden, and on this account it may be expected to take place without that inconvenience which might otherwise be dreaded. At the time of life which has just been mentioned, there is generally some diminution
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in the quantity of fluid, or some alteration in the distance of the period at which the evacuation returns ; and this serves as an indication that it is now ceasing, and, by degrees, becoming unnecessary for the healthy functions of the system.

As, at the period of their approach, the menses were irregular in their appearance, occurring at first after an interval of a different length, and varying in their colour from a paler to a more florid red ; so there is some resemblance to this in the manner of their departure. At this time of life the vigour of the frame begins to decline, the appetite is less keen, and the different means of keeping up the plethoric state of
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the system are diminished; so that such a discharge becomes less necessary.

It has been mentioned as the opinion of some physiologists, that this periodical evacuation is designed to carry off that redundance of fluid, which is only necessary during the period of gestation; and this opinion seems to derive some evidence in its favour, from the circumstance of its ceasing about the time after which a woman seldom becomes pregnant.

As the time of life at which this change of the system takes place is different, so the circumstances under which it occurs are varied; for though, in general, as we have observed, the total cessation is preceded

ceded by a diminution of the quantity discharged, and of the frequency of the returns of this evacuation, yet this is not an invariable rule; for some women experience a considerable increase of it, either in quantity, or in frequency, or in both, at the very time when the menses usually cease.

Although many diseases have been improperly attributed to the cessation of the catamenia, which had no other relation to it than that they occurred about the same time, yet, when all circumstances are considered, it is not surprising that this period of life should frequently prove a very critical one; and, accordingly, we sometimes

find

find that the future health of the woman is determined within a few months after this change of habit is completely formed.

It can easily be conceived how different an effect the loss of such an evacuation must produce in constitutions, that not only vary from each other, but are, in some respects, the very contrast of each other. For instance, if in a very delicate constitution, this discharge has been attended with an increase of debility, loss of appetite, great fatigue on using even moderate exercise, paleness of countenance, and frequent return of fainting fits, it is not improbable that the cessation of this discharge should be attended with some advantage

vantage to the constitution. On the other hand, in a plethoric habit, where the appetite has been good, and the different means of supporting such a state of the system have been employed, and where the monthly evacuation has been only sufficient to keep up a proper balance in the circulating fluids; the discontinuance of such a regular evacuation may be productive of those effects which usually attend upon great fulness of the vessels. At this time, therefore, and under these circumstances, it is not uncommon for a number of diseases to occur, to which the constitution has been pre-disposed, and which waited

waited only for some exciting cause to bring them into action.

These complaints, which were apt to return on any interruption of the menstrual discharge, are now liable to be felt in a more severe degree. In those patients who have been subject to head-ache, this disorder is one of the first that they complain of. This is often attended with flushings in the face, particularly after eating, and with occasional returns of giddiness. Pains in the stomach, and in different regions of the abdomen, occasionally occur, and are attended with a considerable degree of flatulence and frequent acid eructations. Pains in the joints, very much resembling
flight

flight rheumatic affections, form also a part of the sufferings of the patient, on these occasions.

At this time, in some cases, CUTA-NEOUS DISEASES become troublesome, and if they have occurred before, they often appear in the present instances under an aggravated form. These, which at first are only flight affections on the surface, sometimes degenerate into troublesome and obstinate ulcers. They have their seat most frequently in one of the lower extremities, and if they have continued for some time, and the general health be not injured, and especially if the habit be at all relieved by them, every attempt at
 healing

healing them is highly improper. Nature makes an effort in this way, to remove what would prove injurious to the constitution, and an interference with her operations, has often proved of the most serious consequence.

Besides these general inconveniences to which the patient is liable at this period of life, there are some particular affections which demand the attention of the medical practitioner.

In some cases, after the menses have become irregular in the time of their return, or have suffered considerable intermission, a sudden and copious

UTERINE HÆMORRHAGE

occurs, and this is often accompanied by a number of coagula.

It has been already observed that some physiologists have considered the proper menstrual discharge as not consisting of entire blood, but rather as formed of a mixture of red particles and serum, and not taking into its composition any part of the coagulable lymph. If this hypothesis be well founded, the discharge now referred to must be considered rather as a morbid hæmorrhage, than as a natural secretion, and is to be traced to some improper excitement, to which the uterus has been exposed.

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There is, sometimes, reason to suspect that this has been induced by the use of some violent means, which have been employed to promote the uterine discharge after the time that it would naturally cease.*

By whatever cause they have been produced, it requires immediate attention to prevent the mischief likely to ensue. If they arise from an inflamed state of the organ, which may be known by the pain and heat felt in the hypogastric region, by its continuing after the discharge has ceased,

* Electricity, which has sometimes been employed to remove occasional suppressions, and particularly with a view to restore the evacuation, when a total cessation has taken place, has, I believe, been a frequent occasion of these symptoms.

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and more particularly by a tenderness about the os uteri, it will be necessary to employ the means commonly used for the reduction of inflammation. The removal of blood by the lancet must be regulated by the degree of inflammation prevailing, and other circumstances attending the disease.

In order to avoid all pressure on the part affected, or any irritation, it will be necessary to empty the intestines either by some gentle cathartic, or by means of a glyster. The saline cathartics may be most proper in this case; and these may be repeated so as to obviate any intestinal accumulation, which might serve to keep up an irritation

in the vicinity of the affected organ. The use of the antiphlogistic and diaphoretic medicines will be also highly proper.— Antimonials, or ipecacuanha, in small doses, may be taken with a view to determine to the surface of the body, rather than to excite the action of vomiting.— Fomentations may be applied, and the tepid bath may be used with still more advantage. Medicines taken from the class of astringents, or of anodynes, must be employed only under the restrictions pointed out in the treatment of Menorrhagia.

If, after these means have been employed for some time, the heat and pain still continue, together with other symptoms which

have

have been described, there is reason to fear that some derangement in the structure of the organ has taken place, which may terminate in a manner now to be taken notice of.

Of all the diseases to which a patient is subject at this period of life,

SCIRRHUS AND CANCER

are the most painful and alarming. These complaints are very nearly connected, or are, rather, different states of the same disease.

The seat of them is generally either in the breast or in the womb. It has been already remarked that at the time when the menses cease to flow, any disease which

has previously attacked the constitution, is very apt to return; or if it be of the chronic kind, the symptoms will now appear under a more aggravated form.

The mammæ and the uterus, as they stand in a near relation to each other, with respect to the functions which they perform, are liable to diseases of the same nature, particularly to those which have been just mentioned.

Those parts of the body which are of a glandular structure, being susceptible of a peculiar species of inflammation, which does not proceed regularly to suppuration, as the inflammation of other part does, become

become very susceptible of scirrhus and cancerous affections.

In the breasts, as external organs, we have an opportunity of seeing these diseases in their rise, progress, and termination.

At their commencement, the patient feels some uneasiness at the part affected, and very soon discovers a knot, or hard body, which appears round and smooth, and which moves about under the finger that presses it: by degrees it grows larger, and becomes more firm and solid; but, at present, only a small degree of pain is felt, and this is rather occasional and transient, than regular and constant. In this state it may sometimes continue for weeks, for

months, or even for years; but if any accidental injury should reach the part, or if, through any change in the constitution, some morbid action should commence, this, which was at first but a trifling complaint, and hardly sufficient to excite any attention, becomes an alarming disease. The tumour increases in size, its form is more irregular, it grows harder, and becomes more painful. Sometimes the glands in the neighbourhood of that which was originally affected, become diseased, particularly those in the axilla, and at the edge of the pectoral muscle. The pains, by degrees, become more severe, are of a lancinating kind, shoot towards the axilla, and are
attended

attended with a peculiar sensation of burning, as if a caustic had been applied to the part.

The surface of the breast for some time retains its usual colour, but afterward it assumes a red and shining appearance, which degenerates into a more dark and livid hue. As the size of the breast is increased, the nipple is almost lost amidst the surrounding substance; the veins become turgid or varicose, and spread themselves into ramifications resembling the claw of a crab, which circumstance has probably given occasion to the name of cancer.

The symptoms hitherto described are

generally included in that state of the disease which is denominated an OCCULT cancer. But as the skin gradually grows thinner in some part of the tumor, so a fluid matter is felt underneath it, and this is directed towards a prominent part, which opens and discharges a thin sanies, or black corrosive matter, and it now assumes the name of an OPEN cancer.

The edges of the sore become uneven and jagged; surrounding parts are gradually destroyed; deep ulcerations are formed; blood vessels are eroded, and, in consequence of this, violent hæmorrhages often ensue.

These are the symptoms which usually occur,

occur, though not always exactly in the same order, nor with equal degree of violence, in the same stage of the disease.

When a breast is the subject of this complaint, its progress (as we have observed) may be seen, and the symptoms, as they occur, may be inspected and observed; but, when this disease attacks the uterus, it is out of the reach of ocular observation, and we must depend for particular information upon a relation which the patient gives of her sensations.

The disease, when seated in this part, usually commences with pain in the groins, in the hips, and in other parts in the vicinity of the uterus, attended with a

sense of weight and pressure; but as it advances, pains are felt of a more severe and pungent kind, extending through the womb and all the contiguous parts, accompanied with a sense of heat similar to that which has been described as affecting the breasts.

The discharge from the vagina, at its first appearance, is very similar to that of a cancerous kind in other parts, and it becomes more and more offensive to the patient, and to those who surround her.

This disease is very much characterized by the great tenderness of the parts about the os uteri. There is frequently an œdema
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of the labia pudendi, sometimes extending itself to the groin and down the thighs.

The pain which is endured is often so great as to render life a burden; and when all hope of recovery ceases, a wish, attended with a degree of impatience, succeeds, for death to interpose and cut short those sufferings which are too grievous to be borne.

In an advanced stage of this disease, the only assistance which medicine can offer is, in some degree, to arrest its progress, or to palliate those distressing symptoms which have been enumerated. But, though it be acknowledged that at a certain stage it must be ranked in the list of incurable diseases, it by no means follows that there

was no opportunity in the course of it, for interposing such assistance as might have been successful in stopping its progress, and might eventually have proved curative.

Many have been the instances in which I have succeeded in the treatment of a diseased breast, which, if it had been neglected, would probably have been ultimately attended with those dreadful symptoms which have now been described.

It should be remembered that scirrhus and cancer have their origin in an inflamed state of the organ, and that, therefore, if proper means had been employed in the beginning for the reduction of this inflammation, the consequent and most dreadful
part

part of the disease might, in many cases, have been avoided.

The application of a few leeches to the part affected is a very proper mode of commencing the plan of cure. As the inflammation existing in these parts is generally rather of the chronic, than of the acute kind, the slow and gradual emptying of the vessels, by this means, answers the purpose better than a more sudden depletion produced by the use of the lancet, especially if the inflammation be local, and does not depend upon the general state of the system.

Besides the use of leeches, the application of a poultice to the part affected may be
proper.

proper. Saturnine lotions may also be employed, either separately or in connection with the poultice, which may be moistened with it. The use of gentle cathartics will be necessary, as in other inflammations; and a cooling regimen and abstemious diet, will assist in producing the effect at which the practitioner is, in these circumstances, to aim. If, however, notwithstanding the means made use of, a scirrhus should be formed, the cure of this may be attempted by the external use of sea water, or by hemlock poultices.

The different preparations of antimony and of cicuta, may also, at the same time, be employed internally. The electric fluid
has,

has, sometimes, been recommended with a view to the discussion of hard and indolent tumours; but to the use of this powerful remedy there is considerable objection, as it is likely to excite, too much action in the parts, and to produce that termination, so painful and hazardous, which has been described.

If the disease should proceed to the cancerous state, one great object will be to abate the irritation and pain, as well as to correct the nature of the discharge, by the use of opium, cicuta, and other sedative remedies.

External applications may be used with a view to abate the pain, and also to correct

rect the fœtor of the discharge, which is often most highly offensive. With this view the fixed air, as obtained from a fermenting poultice, may be recommended.

Stimulant and caustic applications, such as arsenic and corrosive sublimate, have been employed.

Of the efficacy of these remedies to produce a cure, unfortunately, experience forbids our entertaining any high expectations. With respect to the removal of the diseased part by a surgical operation, some difference of opinion prevails; all however are agreed in the inefficacy of it, to the complete removal of the disease, unless performed at a very early period of it. The best advice, therefore, which can be given is, upon
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the first appearance of inflammation, or the first sensation of pain in those parts which have been most frequently the seat of this disease, to apply for medical aid, which, though ineffectual after the complaint has made a certain progress, may, in the early stages, be employed to considerable advantage, and secure the patient from one of the most formidable diseases to which the human frame is liable.

The curative plan which has been suggested is applicable to the disease, whether its seat be the breast, or the uterus.

In the latter case, the external remedies cannot be applied to the part affected, in the same way as in the former case; but

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a more general application by fomentation, injection, and the tepid bath, may be adopted; and these may be impregnated with those articles of the materia medica which have been found to contain any anodyne, or sedative qualities.

ON DISEASES

WHICH

OCCUR DURING PREGNANCY.

HAVING taken a view of those diseases to which women are liable, whether in the single or married state, we may now proceed to consider those which occur during pregnancy.

When a woman becomes pregnant, such
a change

a change takes place as may well be supposed to affect the general constitution. A new function is established in an important organ, but the consequences of it are not confined to this organ, as in its progress the whole system becomes more or less affected by it. As pregnancy is generally connected with a suspension of the monthly courses, it must be expected that a determination of the blood will undergo a change.

Symptoms of a plethoric state, and of increased excitement of the vascular system, sometimes appear in the early stages of utero-gestation; different organs partake of the effect, and, in some of them, the functions suffer a temporary alteration.

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The respiration is sometimes affected; transient pains of the head are felt, and these are frequently accompanied with drowfiness, as an additional symptom of an increased fulness of the vessels.

Pain and swelling of the mammæ usually occur at this time. With a plethoric state of the system, irritability is very commonly connected; and to this may be attributed those affections of the moving powers which, as we shall hereafter have occasion to observe, are very apt to occur in the pregnant state.

Besides the alteration produced by a suspension of the menses, the gradual increase of size, and the pressure which is
made

made by the gravid uterus on the various contiguous viscera, will produce a change in their functions, and particularly affect the state of the circulating system connected with them. In the later months of pregnancy, the motions of the child are an additional occasion of alteration in the sensations of the mother, and may conspire, with other circumstances, to produce that general change of the habit which has been referred to.

But, besides the general affections now mentioned, the first alterations in the state of her health, after the suspension of the menstrual discharge, are

NAUSEA,

NAUSEA, SICKNESS, AND LOATHING OF
FOOD.

The patient finds, particularly upon rising in the morning, an inclination to discharge the contents of her stomach; and when this occurs pretty regularly, and without any other evident cause, and especially when it succeeds the amenorrhæa just referred to, it is to be considered as a symptom of pregnancy. The stomach is an organ of very extensive sympathy*. Through the medium of the nerves, it partakes not only in the sensations excited

* For a more particular account of this see the Author's Treatise on Nervous Diseases, page 39.

in those organs which are immediately connected with it, but also in those which exist in more remote parts.

The sympathy which it has with the uterus is very evident; as an almost constant effect of conception is interruption in its functions, attended, as we have seen, with nausea and vomiting.

This symptom, though not accompanied with any danger, is exceedingly troublesome; for in some instances it continues through a large portion of the period of gestation, and though the cause of it is known, and at a certain time a termination of these feelings may be expected, yet it is natural to wish for some mitigation of
them,

them, though an entire removal of them cannot be hoped for, till some change in the uterus takes place.

With a view to avoid the effect of that straining to vomit, which is often felt after the contents of the stomach are thrown up, a small quantity of liquid may be taken. A slight infusion of camomile flowers may answer the purpose, and if this be retained for any time upon the stomach, it may give some degree of tone, and lessen the irritability of this organ.

But, as in those cases where the symptoms are very urgent, the effect of this remedy will be too slight, it may be necessary to have recourse to some anodyne,

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which may take off the irritability of the stomach, and suspend, for a time, the distressing symptoms. The want of appetite, though an unpleasant circumstance, cannot be considered as of much importance; it may, in its consequences, be even salutary, as it may prevent an increase of the excitement, which, as we have seen, is very frequently attendant on these occasions.

Women in a state of pregnancy are often subject to a troublesome

HEARTBURN.

This complaint, under whatever circumstances it occurs, is generally considered as an indication of a weak state of the stomach; it must, therefore, be very likely

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to recur when so many causes conspire to induce this state.

This symptom may be relieved by a dose of calcined magnesia, or of alkaline salt, and in some cases the pure ammonia, in small doses, has been employed with success.

Not only does the stomach become disordered, but also the other parts of the alimentary canal.

COSTIVENESS

is a very frequent symptom in this state. This may occur at any period, but it is particularly troublesome in the more advanced stages of pregnancy. As the uterus, with its contents must necessarily occupy a large space in the different

regions of the abdomen, so, consequently, other organs must be removed from their natural situation. This is particularly true of the intestinal canal, and that its peristaltic motion should be affected hereby, is a very probable consequence. Besides this, the state of the stomach already referred to, and the frequent rejection of food, deprive the intestines of that natural and healthy stimulus, which they derive from the passage of the fæces through them. The sedentary life also, which women lead, particularly whilst they are with child, is another cause of the torpid state of the bowels, as well as of other morbid affections.

During

During a great part of the time, the burden which they carry renders much motion inconvenient to them, and various uncomfortable sensations render them averse from those exertions of which they might otherwise be capable.

To obviate the effect of these different causes, and to prevent this constipation of the bowels, it will be necessary to attend to the general diet, as well as occasionally to interpose some gently laxative medicine. As large a proportion of vegetables should be taken as will fit easily on the stomach, or does not produce any pain or griping in the bowels. Ripe fruit also may be taken, under the same limitation. But as this

plan of diet is not always sufficient of itself to produce the desired effect, and as some opening medicine becomes necessary, this should be taken from the gently aperient, rather than the drastic class of cathartics.

If an acid prevail in the stomach or bowels, the calcined magnesia will serve at once to correct this, and to operate as a gentle laxative; but if there be no acid with which it can combine, it generally proves ineffectual, unless taken in a larger dose than is convenient. *Oleum ricini* will prove a very proper laxative, and, if taken in a dose of half an ounce or an ounce, in any mode which the patient may prefer, will

will generally move the bowels without producing any pain or uneasiness. Manna, cream of tartar, kali tartarizatum, and other medicines of the laxative class, may also be occasionally used.

The aloetic cathartics seem to be contra-indicated in the present case, especially if the patient be subject to piles, which are sometimes apt to return, and to prove very troublesome in the present circumstances. A solution of magnes. vitr. with a sufficient quantity of the tinct. fenn. to reconcile the stomach to it, may prove a useful medicine.

But, whilst these different articles may be used with advantage, when they become

absolutely necessary, it is prudent to avoid the use of them when it can be dispensed with; since these, and every other kind of cathartic medicine, by too frequent use lose their effect, and render a return to them more necessary than is consistent with the natural and healthy functions of the intestines. The caution is the more proper in the present case, as the occasion for using them is likely to continue for a considerable time.

To avoid the too frequent repetition of other medicines, a glyster may now and then be injected, in addition to the other means of preventing a costive habit.

In connection with these observations

on

on the state of the intestines, it may be proper to introduce some remarks on the

URINARY FUNCTIONS.

During pregnancy, the woman experiences great variety in the action of those organs which are destined for the secretion, retention, and evacuation of the urine. At different stages of this state, she feels an inclination to make water very frequently returning. This may be attributed, in part, to the general irritability of the system in which the urinary organs partake in common with others, and which may, therefore, account for the frequent micturition which is necessary under these circumstances. Besides this, the state of mind

to which she is frequently exposed, her surprize upon very slight occasions, and other nervous affections, as they have been called, produce a frequent inclination to evacuate the bladder, similar to that which is so observable during the influence of an hysterical paroxysm. The pressure of the uterus upon the bladder, by diminishing its distension, may also render it liable to be excited to action by a smaller quantity of urine than is sufficient on other occasions.

These different causes, therefore, may account for the symptom to which we now refer. This, indeed, can hardly be considered as a disease, since, if the person be
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under no restriction, and have an opportunity of immediately attending to this call of nature, no unpleasent consequences can ensue. It makes it proper for her, however, to avoid, as much as possible, every situation which may expose her to an undue retention of urine, as that might be succeeded by some unpleasent consequences.

This leads me to mention another disorder of the urinary functions which may take place under these circumstances, viz. a *suppression* of urine, either total or partial, which sometimes occurs during the period of gestation. This is owing, in most instances, to the pressure of the uterus on the neck of the bladder. This symptom,

in other cases, is an indication of some inflammation of the organ, or of some calculous concretion, which may prove a source of pain on some future occasion; but in the present case, as it arises from a cause which will soon cease, troublesome and painful as it is, there is no reason, if it be properly attended to, for any apprehension as to future consequences.

When the fundus uteri reaches that situation in which it can rest upon the bones of the pelvis, pressure will be taken off, and the inconvenience arising from it will cease. During the continuance of it, the water must sometimes be drawn off by the catheter. This instrument, however,
should

should not be made use of too early, or till all other means of assisting and promoting that natural evacuation have been tried.

It is proper to remark that, oftentimes, the mere change of posture will facilitate the discharge. A recumbent posture, by making some change in the situation of the *fætus in utero*, or of the uterus itself, will sometimes remove the obstructing cause; or, if one posture of recumbency does not produce the desired effect, another may succeed; as, for instance, if lying on the back does not afford any relief, resting on one side, or the other, will sometimes answer the purpose. As, in recent cases of retention, these methods
have

have sometimes succeeded, it is certainly deserving of any attention that may be necessary to ascertain in what posture, in particular cases, the effect may be produced.

If every other method fails, and the pain and uneasiness become too urgent to be any longer endured, recourse must be had to the use of the catheter. When this has once become necessary, the occasion for its use will, in all probability, continue for some time; in which case it may be proper to use it so often as to prevent any large accumulation of water in the bladder, which, by distending its coats, may
render

render it less capable of acting upon its contents in future.

The symptoms now mentioned constantly attend upon a retroversio uteri; but as this is a disease which does not frequently occur, it may be sufficient just to mention it, and to refer the practitioner to other means of information respecting the management of it.

Another symptom which frequently appears during pregnancy is, an

ÆDEMATOUS ENLARGEMENT OF THE
LOWER EXTREMITIES.

The feet and legs are, in general, the first parts which are affected; but the tumour often extends up the thighs, and
the

the labia and the lumbar region partake of the affection.

Those persons who have been previously subject to complaints of this kind, will generally perceive an aggravation of them at this time. These swellings sometimes are the effect of debility and relaxation of the parts, arising from a want of that exercise which is sufficient to preserve the tone of the muscles, and promote their action upon that part of the circulating system which returns the blood to the heart.

Upon this principle, the appearances of œdema, now referred to, may be accounted for. But another cause may be assigned
for

for this appearance. It sometimes depends upon an unusual pressure on the veins which prevent the return of blood, and excites an increased action on the arterial and exhalant system; and an effusion, in course, takes place. If this pathology be just, it very well explains the cause of the œdema, which we are now considering. The gradual enlargement of the gravid uterus must necessarily produce some pressure on the principal branches of the vena cava, and prevent the return of blood to the superior parts of the body. Arterial action may be excited to overcome this resistance; the exhalent arteries may throw out their contents faster than the
absorbents

abforbents can take them up again, and thus an accumulation may take place.

As this symptom can be referred to a cause which we can see in all its extent, and to the termination of which we can look with a degree of certainty, there is no occasion for the same anxious sollicitude which, under different circumstances, would be necessary.

These œdematous appearances are, in some cases, the consequence of pressure by an organ enlarged by disease. When this occurs, both the symptom and the cause of it may be a source of mischief; but, in the instances now referred to, though the symptom be troublesome, the cause is
nothing

nothing more than the progress of a natural function in a healthy organ.

As soon as the uterus is delivered of its burden the swelling usually subsides, and confirms the opinion that it was the effect not of a permanent, but of a transient cause. To a similar occasion also, may be ascribed that varicose state of the veins which is sometimes observed by women in this situation. This has, in some instances, produced unnecessary alarm, since this symptom will, in all probability, disappear, together with the other just referred to, soon after parturition. But, if any vessel near the surface should suffer a considerable degree of distention, and this
should

should be attended with any pain, a compress upon the part, applied with care and judgment, will enable the coats of the vessel to react upon its contents. Some astringent lotion may also be applied in aid of the mechanical effects of the compress or bandage.

THE CRAMP

oftentimes proves distressing to women during their pregnancy. This attacks them most frequently in the night, and the lower extremities are the most common seat of this complaint. The patient is very suddenly awakened by it, and cries out with the extremity of the pain.

This symptom, like many others which

we have had occasion to mention, may be traced to an unequal excitement of the nervous energy, or to some general sympathy of different parts of the system.

Moving out of bed has, in some instances, afforded instantaneous relief from the pain. Whether this is to be attributed to the change of posture, or of temperature, is not certain; but the effect has been pretty general; and when relief has been obtained, the patient has returned into bed, and been free from any farther pain or interruption for that night.

When persons have been long subject to this complaint, I have known considerable advantage to arise from tepid bathing, or
warm

warm fomentations. Immersing the feet and legs in warm water, just before getting into bed, and wrapping them up in flannel, or putting on a woollen stocking with a garter, has prevented an attack for that night, and when the habit has been in this manner interrupted for a few times, the patient has remained free from the complaint for a considerable period. A bottle of warm water, or a heated brick, where a fomentation or immersion would have been inconvenient, has proved a useful substitute.

SPASMODIC

SPASMODIC AFFECTIONS IN THE STOMACH
AND BOWELS

are apt to trouble the patient during the course of her pregnancy. These very much resemble the pain of the colic. They have their seat in different parts of the abdomen, sometimes apparently affecting the muscles and external integuments, and at other times removing to the more interior parts, and producing pain in the different viscera.

If these increase in their degree of violence, and especially if they visit the person in the more advanced stages of her pregnancy, they form, not merely a troublesome and painful, but a dangerous symptom.

symptom. The stretching of the uterus, or its ligaments, may occasion pain, and the pressure of it, more immediately, on the other viscera of the abdomen, is very apt to produce some alterations in the actions of these organs.

If this spasmodic affection occur in a woman of very plethoric habit, it may be necessary immediately to take away a few ounces of blood from the arm, and, in this manner, to liberate the system from any oppression, under which it may labour.

If it should appear that very speedy relief is obtained by this evacuation, the bleeding may be repeated upon any return of the symptoms.

As

As a farther means of promoting the desired effect, some eccoprotic remedy may be used, in order to remove from the bowels every accumulation of fæces, which might become a source of irritation. The effect of this evacuation may also be felt throughout the whole of the circulating system, and may promote a more free and equable distribution of the fluids. Emptying the bowels, also, is the best means of relieving or obviating that flatulence which is so commonly complained of, and to which the patient is apt to attribute the whole of her uneasiness. If, after these evacuations, the pain still continue, it may

be necessary to take off irritation by a gentle anodyne.

CONVULSIONS

form one of the most dangerous diseases during the period of utero-gestation; and to these, in some cases, the general state of the system very strongly disposes.

We have already observed that fulness and irritability are prominent features in the general habit of the patient under pregnancy; and we cannot be surprised, therefore, that any disease connected with such a predisposition should now and then occur. If she have been previously subject to those complaints which are usually called nervous; if from slight causes faintings, tremors,

mors, or hysterical paroxysms have been apt to return, they may be particularly expected to appear during pregnancy.

But besides these more transient affections, an

EPILEPTIC PAROXYSM

sometimes occurs, which, especially in the more advanced stages of gestation, is a very formidable disease.

Previously to the commencement of the fit, pains are felt in the head, attended with tinnitus aurium and dimness of sight. Great lassitude and indisposition to motion prevail in the day, and, at night, sleep is often interrupted by frightful dreams.

A general restlessness prevails, attended

sometimes with a slight giddiness, and at others with oppression about the præcordia, distention of the stomach, palpitation of the heart, quick respiration, and a frequent discharge of pale urine.

After some time the patient is suddenly seized with convulsions, the eyes are turned in a very unnatural manner, and the other features are in a state of distortion; the teeth are closed, there is a foaming at the mouth, and if particular care be not taken, the tongue gets between the teeth and is wounded. The fingers are drawn into the palm of the hand, and contracted so strongly that it is not easy to reduce them.

During the continuance of the fit, the
patient

patient has not any particular sensations which can afterwards be recollected; but in a little time she falls into a state of slumber, out of which she awakes without feeling herself refreshed, and continues for some time in a state of lassitude. Frequently, a pain in the head continues for some time, and considerable soreness is felt all over the body, as the consequence of the general distortion of muscles; or owing, in part, probably, to the force used to prevent her injuring herself or those around her.

This disease comes on at different periods of pregnancy; but, at the more advanced stages its effects are most to be dreaded.

The treatment of it under these circumstances will be similar to that which is observed on other occasions. The cure of epilepsy very much depends upon an attention to the general state of the system, whether inclining to plethora or inanition.

Upon a comparison of a number of cases in which the disease occurs, I believe it will be found that, in by far the most numerous instances, a plethora prevails.

As the state of pregnancy, from causes already stated, is generally attended with a fulness of the vessels, it is not unnatural to suppose that when epilepsy occurs it has its origin in this. The state of the
head,

head, however, rather than that of the general habit, is to be our guide in this instance. If, therefore, we observe symptoms of great determination to the head; if the face appear bloated and swollen; if the vessels of the tunica conjunctiva be filled with red blood; or if other symptoms of a distended vascular system prevail, it will be necessary, in the first instance, to take away some blood by the lancet. This, by reducing the quantity of the circulating fluid, and taking off the pressure on different parts, will sometimes shorten the paroxysm; an opportunity is then afforded for the exhibition of some medicine by the mouth. In general, be-

ides bleeding, it will be necessary to empty the bowels by the use of purging medicines; and, in order to prevent any farther accumulation, an abstemious and cooling diet may, for some time, be prescribed.

During the paroxysm, if it should continue a considerable time, and it be not possible to get down any thing by the mouth, glysters of different kinds may be thrown up, according to the different indications. These may be formed of ingredients either of the cathartic, the anodyne, or antispasmodic kind. Fomentations may also be used to the lower extremities, or a femicupium may be employed.

employed. Frictions also may be tried, or volatile embrocations may be applied to different parts of the body, and if great torpor should supervene, the application of a blister may be highly proper and necessary. The particular mode of treatment, however, must be regulated, not only by the symptoms of disease, but by the stage of pregnancy to which the person has advanced.

If these convulsions should occur at the period in which abortion or miscarriage are likely to happen, it will be necessary to avoid any means which, though in other respects proper, might hasten this termination.

But this disease sometimes approaches when the woman has advanced to her full time, and even when labour is just commencing.

These epileptic convulsions sometimes terminate in apoplexy, when, instead of those violent agitations and spasmodic affections which have been described, there is a total insensibility. Stertorous breathing comes on, accompanied with a redness or almost livid colour in the face, indicating the difficult return of blood from the head. In this state the woman has sometimes been delivered, and she has not been awakened from this profound coma till some hours, or even days, after this event.

The

The farther treatment of the patient must be regulated by the degree of lochial discharge which takes place. If this prove considerable, and the symptoms of fulness should be less evident, it may be hoped that the natural evacuations which are going on will be sufficient, and that she will gradually recover. The principal attention must then be directed to the state of the bowels, and to the prevention of every thing that would discompose or irritate, and thus endanger the return of any of these alarming symptoms.

The next subject to be considered is
that of

HEMORRHAGY AND PREMATURE LABOUR.

During the months of pregnancy, there is, in general, a cessation of the menses; but this is not an invariable rule, since there are some cases in which they continue for a time after conception, and others in which there are occasional returns of them during the whole period of utero-gestation.

When this has been customary in former pregnancies, and no abortion or miscarriage has ensued, it may be attributed rather to some peculiarity in the constitution, than

to

to any cause from which immediate mischief is to be expected. But in other instances, when the menses have ceased, and this cessation has been accompanied with other symptoms of pregnancy, if any discharge take place from the womb or vagina, it ought to be considered as a morbid affection, and as deserving of immediate attention.

It may be proper also farther to observe, that hæmorrhages sometimes succeed a suppression of the menses, which has been mistaken for a symptom of pregnancy, but which has existed independently of it

But the disease which we are now

to

to treat of, is that which occurs in cases where there is no doubt of pregnancy; and where, consequently, it is desirable not only that the life and health of the mother should be preserved, but also that the fœtus should be continued in utero till the proper period of expulsion arrive.

THE MENORRHAGIA GRAVIDARUM, OR A
FLOODING,

as it has been called, is not confined to any particular period of gestation, but may happen either in the earlier or later months. The consequence to the mother, however, is very different according to the period at which it occurs.

If

If it should take place about the second or third month, though abortion might be the consequence, yet the life of the mother would not be in danger ; but, when it happens at a late period, there is considerable reason for apprehension on her account.

In the earlier months the vessels from which the discharge proceeds, are smaller, and the flow is much more gradual than at a later period ; but if, together with this, there be pains in the back and loins, resembling labour pains ; if there be a discharge of a watery fluid, and especially if a vascular skinny substance appear, which may be supposed to be part of the mem-
brana

brana decidua, abortion will, in all probability, follow; from which, however, though the fætus be lost, the mother will gradually recover.

The same symptoms occurring about the seventh month or later, will generally be attended with some danger. At this time, the diameter of the blood-vessels forming a communication between the uterus and placenta is considerably enlarged, and consequently, upon any separation of the placenta, a large discharge ensues. In whatever stage of pregnancy, therefore, hæmorrhages appear, they ought to excite immediate attention, as the time

at

at which assistance can be offered with the most probability of success, is at the very commencement of the complaint. As soon, therefore, as any discharge appears, the patient should be cautioned against every thing that can increase the circulation. All muscular exertion must be avoided, as much as possible; she should indulge herself by a longer continuance than usual in bed; or, if the warmth of the bed increase the discharge, she may recline upon a sofa for part of the day, and thus, by keeping herself in a horizontal posture, may prevent an aggravation of the symptoms. If a sudden surprize or
fright

fright should have preceded the symptoms, or if there have been any particular cause for anxiety, the mind must be soothed, and all fresh occasion of a similar kind, as much as possible, avoided.

It is of great importance here to repeat the caution formerly given against a practice which is too frequent on these occasions, and from which considerable mischief has arisen: I mean that of presenting some cordial in order to cheer the spirits, and to support the strength. The consequence of this is a farther excitement of the circulating system, and an increase of that discharge which constitutes the disease.

Instead

Instead of such a practice, it is necessary to keep the patient as cool and calm as possible; every thing, whether of diet or medicine, which is of a heating and stimulating nature must be avoided.

If, after such precautions, the hæmorrhagy still continue to increase, it may be proper to take away a few ounces of blood, regulating the quantity by the strength of the patient, and the urgency of the symptoms. If lowness and fainting should supervene, this will prove one means of abating it, and therefore should not excite any alarm in the mind of the patient or her friends.

Besides

Besides the use of the lancet, if this be necessary, it will also be very proper to attend to the state of the bowels. If the patient has been costive for some time, and there be reason to suppose that there is an accumulation of fæces, as this is likely to promote irritation on the neighbouring parts, it will be right to procure a few gentle stools.

This may be done, as was recommended on other occasions, by a mild aperient remedy. The use of any violent or drastic purgative on this occasion will excite too much irritation on the different portions of the intestinal canal, and may determine

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the circulation to the uterus, and thus increase, instead of diminishing the discharge from that organ. In aid of other means employed for diminishing the force of the circulation, and thus abating the discharge, the atmosphere surrounding the patient should be kept as cool as it can be consistently with her general feelings. Her drink should be taken cold. If acids do not disagree with the stomach or bowels, the moderate use of them will be pleasant and cooling.

The juice of lemons diluted with water will make a very grateful beverage; balm or sage tea, acidulated in the same manner,

manner, and taken cold, will be equally proper.

If, after evacuations have been employed, together with other means to abate the circulation and lessen the discharge, it should still continue, and there should be symptoms of irritation in the system, the use of a gentle anodyne may be attended with very good effects. This may be combined with some article of the diaphoretic class, and thus it may produce a more general circulation, and determine to the surface of the body.

An antimonial remedy, thus combined, may be exhibited in such a dose as to keep

up

up a gentle nausea, without exciting vomiting, and will produce a very desirable effect on the whole system.

Ipecac. in small doses may be taken with the same view, or it may be given in the form of Dover's powder. Digitalis also, by weakening the action of the heart and arteries, will restrain hæmorrhagy.

When the plan of evacuation has been carried as far as the different indications will justify, the use of some astringent remedies may be recommended, with a view to produce some constriction of the vessels; and when the hæmorrhagy appears to be rather of the passive than of the
active

active kind, the use of these may be adopted at an earlier period.

We have already remarked the propriety of the application of cold through the medium of the atmosphere. By this mode, the whole system may be affected; but, in addition to this, some topical applications have been found very efficacious in restraining hæmorrhages. Cold water and vinegar may be applied to the external parts, or they may be conveyed by means of a sponge or compress to internal parts, and maybe so changed, when they become warm, as to answer the purpose very well. In some very urgent cases, ice has been applied to
the

the parts more immediately concerned, with great advantage.

Besides this mode of treatment, the internal use of some astringent medicines will be proper. Acidum vitriolicum, gummi kino, and various other articles of the astringent class, may be used.

When these, or other means, do not prove effectual for the suppression of the discharge, the next attention is to be paid to the delivery of the child; that so the uterus, being emptied of its contents, may contract, and thus the mouths of those vessels from which the discharge has proceeded may be closed.

The exact time when this shall be

G

attempted

attempted, and in what way the delivery shall be conducted, must be left to the determination of the attending practitioner.

The medical treatment to be observed after delivery must be regulated by the different circumstances that occur, and the particulars of it will be seen amongst the observations on Menorrhagia Lochialis, or other diseases which happen after delivery, which we shall immediately proceed to consider.

ON DISEASES
WHICH
OCCUR AFTER PARTURITION.

AFTER those complaints to which a woman is liable during pregnancy, there are some which are peculiar to her situation as the mother of a new-born child, or to what is usually called the puerperal

state. This is one of those periods at which an important change takes place in the functions of the system. As at the time of puberty, and the commencement of the monthly courses, there is some alteration, and as pregnancy produces another variation in the general economy, so parturition is attended with some action of the system to which it was not before accustomed. The fœtus, which has been nourished for some months through the medium of one organ, has now changed its manner of life, and depends upon assistance from its mother in another way; and the organs which are destined to provide the principal part of its support are consequently employed

ployed in a manner which was before unnecessary. The mammæ therefore now assume an important office, and furnish to the child that nutriment which is best adapted to its health and growth. The uterus, which has long contained the foetus, is now delivered of its burden; and the pressure, which, in consequence of its enlargement, affected every organ in its vicinity, is removed.

A pressure on other parts, however, takes place during the passage of the child through the os uteri and vagina; and to the circumstances attending this, in particular instances, some puerperal maladies may be attributed.

In consequence of this pressure, in some cases, an injury is done to different parts in the vicinity of the uterus. The bladder, for instance, partakes of this, and a temporary suppression or incontinence of urine sometimes succeeds a difficult labour. As the state of pressure is altered, so the circulation through the different abdominal viscera undergoes some change. This is a very general view of the changes which take place at the time of parturition.

In treating of the different puerperal diseases, we may begin with those which occur first in order of time. In general, the

the first complaint which we hear from a woman, in this situation, is of the

AFTER PAINS.

These, though they can scarcely be considered as a distinct disease, yet sometimes require the assistance of medicine.

If there be any portions of coagulated blood left in the uterus after delivery, these will give rise to the pains now referred to, which are only an effort of nature for their expulsion, just as the labour pains are designed to promote the birth of the child. These pains may also arise from the contractions of the uterus, whilst returning to its original size after the expulsion of the foetus. If, however, they continue for

some time, or are so violent as very much to distress the patient, to produce great restlessness, and prevent taking that sleep which is particularly necessary in her circumstances, it will be proper to remove, or at least to diminish them. Considered as a salutary effort of nature, they ought not to be entirely counteracted, yet they may admit of some palliation.

With this view, an anodyne may be prescribed with very good effect; and this may be prepared in such a dose as, if given in the evening, to secure a good night's rest; or it may be taken in smaller doses, and be frequently repeated, so as gradually to abate the pain.

Another

Another disease which sometimes occurs after delivery, is an immoderate discharge from the uterus, or what has been termed by Nosologists

MENORRHAGIA LOCHIALIS.

The state of this discharge becomes an object of attention immediately after the birth of the child. This, as it takes place, more or less, in all cases of parturition, is not to be considered as a disease, till by the increasing quantity, or long continuance of it, the patient's strength be so much exhausted, as to endanger her life or health. The placenta, being designed as the medium of communication between the mother and the child, after the birth of the

latter, is of no farther use, and therefore is generally discharged nearly at the same time with the child. Upon the removal of this, the vessels, by which it communicated with the uterus, continue for some time to pour forth part of their contents, which is afterwards discharged through the vagina. When this discharge proceeds in a regular way it will first appear of a red colour; but as the mouths of the vessels gradually lessen by the contractions of the uterus, so it becomes paler, like a mixture of blood and water: after this, it has the appearance of serum of a yellow or greenish colour, and becomes pale and limpid when it is nearly ceasing. This is a representation

mentation of what takes place in the common course of things; but if from the birth of a large child, from a difficult labour, from the retention of the whole or part of the placenta, or of any coagula, the uterus be prevented from contracting, the consequence is an hæmorrhage, which often proves a serious disease. Under these circumstances the patient becomes languid, the colour forsakes the face, the lips grow pale, vision is indistinct, and frequently fainting ensues.

The lochial discharge sometimes appears in a fluid state, but at other times it assumes a coagulated appearance. The quantity is not easily ascertained, nor is it of much

consequence that it should be, since the danger from this disease is not to be estimated so much by this circumstance, as by the effect which it produces upon the patient. The general habit and constitution, therefore, as well as the nature of the labour, must be taken into consideration, to enable us to determine what degree of danger is to be apprehended, as well as in what manner the disease should be treated. If the patient be of a plethoric habit, if she have been formerly subject to hæmorrhages of any kind, and has not been injured by them, but has experienced some relief under them; if, in the present case, the pulse maintain its strength in a tolerable

tolerable degree, if no faintings occur, nor the countenance indicate a tendency to them, it may be hoped that the discharge itself will reduce the power of the heart and the action of vessels, and thus prove sufficient for its own cure; but if, on the contrary, the *vis vitæ* fail very rapidly, and the pulse be weak, quick, and fluttering, it will be necessary immediately to employ the most proper means for checking the discharge, and supporting the strength of the patient.

It is particularly necessary in this place to notice the caution which has been repeatedly given respecting the improper use of wine or other cordials, with a view

to

to strengthen and comfort the patient under these circumstances.

This practice, as before observed, is not merely useless, as not at all adapted to remove the cause of these symptoms; but is highly injurious, as it is calculated to increase and aggravate the mischief. By increasing the action of the heart and arteries, the circulation is accelerated, and the flow of blood from the open mouths of the vessels is proportionably increased. One of the first means to be employed is to keep the patient as cool as possible, and with a view to this, to lower the temperature of the air, by which she is surrounded. This regulation is found useful in other
hæmorrhages,

hæmorrhages, and is acknowledged to be necessary on other occasions, even when the uterus is the seat of the disease: but a prejudice against it, in the present circumstances, has been imbibed, and it has been thought necessary to keep a woman, whilst lying-in, particularly warm. But, not to say any thing of the fallacy of the reasonings used on this occasion, if there were even some risk of future inconveniencies, it would be necessary to obviate the dangerous symptom now referred to: but, by a prudent management, all danger of catching cold may be avoided, as constant experience proves. So necessary, indeed, is an attention to this direction, that it has been
found

found that other means, employed with a view to check a flooding, have proved ineffectual, merely because counteracted by an excessive degree of heat, or the use of other stimuli.

In this disease, it is advisable for the patient to avail herself of every advantage of posture: to lay the head as low as convenient, and to raise the hips, is a part of regimen that is worth attending to, and particularly in those cases where fainting is produced. Cool and acidulated drinks may be taken ad libitum, or as far as they are found to agree with the stomach. Acid. vit. dilut. may be exhibited in the most convenient vehicle.

If

If pain accompany this discharge of the lochia, an anodyne may be given either alone, or in connection with the mineral acid prescribed. At an early period of this discharge, the use of antimonial remedies may be had recourse to, particularly if there be a strong action of the arterial system. Whatever be the preparation of antimony that is preferred, and in whatever form it be given, the dose must be so managed as not to excite vomiting; but merely to keep up that degree of nausea, which will serve to abate the action of the heart and arteries. This will sometimes answer the purpose of keeping the bowels moderately open; but, if it should not
produce

produce this effect, and the patient should be costive, some gentle aperient may be used, which will answer the purpose of discharging the fæces, without much disturbing the bowels. The use of external remedies is sometimes necessary. The application of cloths dipped in vinegar and water to the loins, and to the region of the pubis, has been found useful. Styptic injections have also been thrown into the vagina and uterus with advantage, when other means have failed. When the violence of hæmorrhage has abated, our next attention is to be paid to the recovery of the patient's strength. This is to be obtained chiefly by diet and regimen. The
diet

diet must consist of that food which is of most easy digestion. Chicken-broth, beef-tea, and similar articles, will convey nutriment into the system, till the stomach be capable of digesting solid food. A moderate quantity of wine may then be allowed, or, if porter be more agreeable beverage, this may be substituted in its place. As soon as the patient is capable of it, a change of air and moderate exercise will contribute, with other means, to a speedy restoration of health and strength.

A state of the lochial discharge, directly contrary to that which has been described, sometimes occurs, viz. *a morbid diminution or total cessation of it.* It is usual, as we
have

have seen, for this discharge to continue for a few days after delivery, by degrees to abate, and thus gradually to cease. But, on some occasions, there will be a sudden cessation of it, and the effect of this will soon be felt by the patient. In this case she will complain of pain in the loins and region of the pubis, a sense of weight and fulness in these parts, together with difficulty of making water, and also pain on going to stool. The head is likewise affected, and the breasts become tumid and painful.

These symptoms may accompany any cessation of the lochial discharge; but, in some cases, they are an indication of *in-*

flammation

Inflammation of the uterus, or its appendages.

In these instances, besides the other symptoms, there will be shiverings at the approach of the disease, and these will be succeeded by an increased degree of heat, a hard, full, and quick pulse, and all the symptoms of general fever. There will be considerable heat, particularly about the region of the uterus, and this will be accompanied with a throbbing kind of pain, and a tenderness in the region of this organ, and, more especially, in the os uteri. In the case of cessation, or sudden diminution of this discharge, attended by the milder symptoms above described, the application of fomentations to the abdomen

will

will be proper. An emollient glyster may be thrown up as an internal fomentation; this may also have the effect of producing a stool or two, and thus emptying the rectum of any fæces which may be accumulated there. In addition to this, however, some laxative medicine should be taken, in order to clear the whole intestinal canal, and prevent any irritation in that part of the system. The medicines which are supposed to act as emmenagogues have sometimes been employed in these cases, with a view to restore the evacuation; but it is much better to avoid every thing which would produce heat, or too much action in the system: since, if there
should

should be any inflammation, these would tend to aggravate the disease. The plan we have hitherto recommended is adapted to the milder state of the disease; but, if, as we have supposed, the sensations and appearances should be such as to indicate an inflammation of the uterus, of which the suppression of the lochia is a symptom, instead of constituting the primary disease, our immediate attention must be directed to the reduction of this inflammation. This must be treated in a manner similar to that which is employed in other inflammations. Venesection must be prescribed according to the urgency of the symptoms, and the strength of the patient.

During

During the continuance of those symptoms, the antiphlogistic treatment must be strictly adhered to. Some topical bleeding may be used, even after venesection has been employed; a number of leeches may be applied to the abdomen, or hypogastric region. Saline cathartics may be used to prevent any accumulation of fæces, and to assist the other attempts at reducing the inflammation. The use of fomentations and glysters, as before recommended, in a milder form of the disease, may be equally proper in the present form of it.

The use of the semicupium may be highly beneficial in these cases. Care should be taken, however, in this as well

as in other instances, that the temperature of the water be properly regulated. If a diarrhoea should supervene, instead of being suddenly checked, it should be suffered to take its course. This obstruction is generally more alarming in proportion to its early occurrence, as the discharge is of much more consequence within a few days after delivery, than at a later period: an attention, therefore, to every means of prevention, or of cure, at this time, is of proportional importance.

ON THE DIFFERENT
DISEASES OF THE BREASTS OCCURRING
DURING THE PUERPERAL STATE.

THIS is the period in which these organs first discover the particular use for which they were designed,—that of preparing nourishment for the infant during the first few months after its birth. In the performance of their important functions they are sometimes impeded, or some irregularity takes place which endangers their structure. From a variety of causes, they may become the seat of disease. The early secretion of milk is a plain indication that it is intended for the child to
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be placed to the breast, as soon as the mother is sufficiently recovered from the fatigue which she has undergone. If this be neglected, or too long deferred; if, from any defect in the nipples, or any other circumstance, it be prevented, a superabundant quantity of milk is collected, by which the vessels are distended; and pain, hardness, and inflammation, are often the consequences. But besides these causes of disease, the application of cold, whether acting immediately upon the breasts, or through the medium of the constitution, may produce the effect. The patient first complains of a sense of fulness and uneasiness in her breast, attended with a weight and pres-

ture, which naturally leads her to place her hand underneath, with a view to support it. In some cases this is succeeded by uneasiness in the axilla, or by a hard lump in some part of the breast, which is particularly susceptible of pain upon pressure. If the inflammation continue, it will assume a florid colour, which is gradually diffused over the whole of the organ. In a little time, if the disease be not arrested in its progress, some part will appear more prominent than the rest, and a throbbing pain will be felt: in this way it will go on till suppuration take place, when, as the matter contained increases, and the skin becomes thinner, it will

will be felt by the finger, and in a little time will be discharged from the most depending part of the tumour. When it has made an opening, at which it can discharge itself, the violence of the pain abates, and by degrees the tumour becomes less, and the sore gradually heals. This is a description of a very favourable termination of the complaint, but sometimes it becomes a more serious and obstinate disease. If the part, in which the suppuration takes place, be unfavourable for the discharge of the pus, as for instance, if it should be formed in the superior part of the breast, it will sometimes make its way towards other parts, besides the opening

at which it at first began to discharge itself; so that sinuses are formed, and the sore becomes more difficult to heal. In some cases, during the progress of these symptoms, a febrile action is excited in the constitution; the pulse is quickened; an increase of heat is felt on the surface; the tongue becomes foul, and transient shiverings alternate with increased degrees of heat: but as these symptoms generally disappear as soon as the pain and inflammation of the part subside, they must be considered as symptomatic, rather than as forming the primary disease.

What has been denominated

THE

THE MILK FEVER,

is so nearly connected with the present subject, that it may not be improper to introduce it in this place. It commences with a smart rigor, followed by an increase of heat, and all the other symptoms which form a febrile paroxysm. This, like other fevers, is a general affection of the system, and stands in the same relation to these topical diseases of the breast, as other fevers do to the inflammation of any other organ. In the case of primary fever, the rigor, heat, and quickness of pulse, are the symptoms which first announce the approach of the disease, and the affections of the breast being connected with it, distinguish it as

the milk fever; whereas, if after the same febrile accession the intestines, the peritonæum, or the uterus, had been particularly affected, we should have distinguished the disease by some other name. In some instances, though very rarely, in the course of the disease, the head is affected, and a delirium takes place.

The treatment of this disease is so connected with that of the local affection of the breasts, that they may be considered together. The fever, when it occurs, demands the first attention; and it will be necessary to treat this in a manner very similar to a fever of the same nature, occurring on other occasions. This disease,
appearing

appearing in a mild form, will frequently subside in a day or two, under a little judicious management. The first step to be taken is to produce a copious evacuation from the bowels. This will answer the purpose of taking off irritation, and of producing a general relaxation of the system. Another advantage also to be derived from it, is the prevention of too great a determination to the breast; which, as we have observed, forms an important symptom of this disease.

The saline cathartics seem very well adapted to these cases, as they generally operate quickly, and often produce a very considerable degree of watery excretion

from the intestines. Experience evinces the efficacy of this mode of treatment, as we find that in some recent cases, or where the fever is but just forming, it will put a speedy termination to it. But, if the heat, fulness, and pain of the breast increase, and if there be a quantity of milk secreted, it will be necessary, either by the mouth of the child, or by some other means, to remove this, and thus to take off the distention of the organ for the present, whilst other means are employed for preventing any further mischief. After the operation of the aperient remedies, it will be necessary to promote a free perspiration by the use of saline medicines, with, or without,
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the addition of some antimonial preparation. It has been observed that, in some of these cases, the head soon becomes affected with pain, and that this is sometimes succeeded by delirium. If, in these instances, there be a fulness in the countenance, with a red ferrety eye, and other symptoms of determination to the head, it will be proper to apply leeches to the temples, and afterwards a blister to the nape of the neck, or behind the ears. Fomenting the feet is also a useful practice under these circumstances.

If this fever should terminate in an inflammation of the breast, the symptoms and progress of which have been just de-

scribed, it will then be necessary to direct the attention more particularly to the cure of this as a local disease.

Besides the method already proposed on the commencement of the fever, which would be very proper even if the inflammation were the primary instead of the secondary disease, it will be necessary to check it by some topical applications. Bleeding with leeches oftentimes proves effectual for the reduction of the inflammation; the number to be applied, and the encouragement which should be given to the continuance of the bleeding, must be regulated by the degree of inflammation.

In the incipient stage, the use of some
cooling

cooling lotion may be very proper. Emollient fomentations and cataplasms may also be applied with advantage. In those cases where a flow of milk to the breast has been rendered unnecessary, or has become troublesome, it has been diminished by placing in the axilla a piece of cotton, dipped in an embrocation, containing of aqua ammoniæ one part, with spir. vin. camph. three parts.

If, notwithstanding all the means used for the reduction of the inflammation, it still continue, and proceed to suppuration in the manner which has already been described, it will be necessary to promote this by the application of warm poultices frequently
renewed

renewed, till an opening be made, and the contents be discharged.

PUERPERAL FEVER.

THIS name has been given to a disease which occurs in the puerperal state; but is of so general a signification, that it would equally well apply to any other febrile complaint occurring in the same state.

It has, however, been used in a more confined sense, to distinguish a disease which we are now about to describe. This disease generally occurs about the second or third day after parturition, though it sometimes appears at a later period. It is
introduced

introduced by shiverings, which are sometimes more distinct and violent, and at other times more transient and less distinctly marked, recurring at intervals, rather than forming a distinct paroxysm. These are succeeded by an increase of heat, a quickness of pulse, and the general restlessness which accompanies an accession of fever.

The patient soon complains of pains in the abdomen, which she sometimes mistakes for after pains, or at other times for colic; but which are easily distinguished from these by the intelligent practitioner. This pain continues for some time, and is particularly characterized by great tenderness

ness over the whole surface of the abdomen, but chiefly about the hypogastric region. The seat of it, however, is not always exactly the same; but is extended to different parts, from the region of the stomach to that of the pubis, or laterally to that of the ilium. The abdomen is generally tumid and hard, and in some cases, the swelling assumes a conical form.

The least pressure of the hand upon the part affected produces excessive pain, and even the weight of the bed clothes, in some cases, is hardly to be borne. When there is any complaint of pain in the head, it is generally described as seated in the forehead or between the eye-brows. It
might

might be expected in a disease so particularly connected with the puerperal state, that the mammæ and uterus should participate, and that their functions should be altered; but this is not, in general, the case; at least affections of these organs do not occur so regularly as to entitle them to a place amongst the pathognomonic symptoms.

If a defect of milk, or any pain of the breasts occur, it is to be considered rather as a consequence of the general derangement of the system taking place during this complaint, than as a part of the original affection.

The lochial discharge also frequently
goes

goes on with great regularity whilst the patient labours under this disease, until, as in the case of the breasts just now stated, the general system becomes affected; and then its various functions are in course deranged.

The respiratory functions are often much affected in this disease; this, indeed, may well be expected, when we consider how much they are connected with the action of the abdominal muscles, and to how much pain the patient is exposed upon every exertion of these muscles. The connection of the peritonæum with the diaphragm, will also account for the effect produced on the action of the lungs.

The

The tongue is white and dry with darker colour in the centre. The stomach is frequently much disordered, sometimes a considerable pain is felt, and on other occasions sickness and vomiting are produced. The matter thrown up is sometimes of a yellow, and at others of a green colour; but the most unpleasent appearance, and that which is often attended with other dangerous symptoms, is an ejection of a dark coloured matter, resembling coffee grounds.

The state of the bowels is various: in some cases the belly is costive, but not unfrequently a diarrhoea occurs. This often appears to be an effort of nature to throw

off

off some offensive matter, as the stools are dark coloured and foetid.

The urine is sometimes discharged in small quantities, and with a degree of pain; this symptom, however, is not necessarily connected with this disease, but is observed to accompany many of the complaints which occur in the puerperal state.

This fever usually terminates between the fifth and twelfth day from its first appearance. If the disease be slight, or assistance be called in at an early period, it is not uncommon to confine its duration within the period of twenty-four hours; but, if neglected in the beginning, or if mistaken for some other disease, and in
consequence

consequence of this it be improperly treated, there is danger of a fatal termination. The degree of danger may also be estimated according to the period at which the disease commences.

If the febrile symptoms occur very soon after delivery, they in general appear in a more aggravated form, and are attended with more danger, than when they occur at a later period. If the diarrhœa, which has been mentioned, be attended with an abatement of pain, with a pulse diminishing in its quickness, and increasing in its strength, with a more free and easy respiration; or if, independently of the diarrhœa, these circumstances take place, it will lead
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to a favourable prognosis. If, on the other hand, the pain and tenderness of the abdomen continue with tumour and hardness, even after the bowels have been emptied; if delirium occur; if the pulse should become weaker and quicker; if respiration should be laborious; if there be a vomiting of dark coloured matter; if a number of discoloured spots should appear on the face, the arms, or different parts of the body, and all these should be attended with great restlessness and a countenance indicating anxiety and distress, there would be great reason to fear a fatal termination.

An opportunity of inspecting the body after death sometimes occurring, I have
availed

availed myself of this advantage in order to acquire a more perfect knowledge of the nature and cause of this disease.

On laying open the abdominal cavity, the following appearances present themselves: marks of inflammation are seen on the peritonæum, which is in some parts thickened, and in others adheres to the intestines. The omentum also presents marks of inflammation; and this, together with the peritonæum, and some parts of the intestines, is covered with a curdly kind of substance, which appears to have been thrown out during the inflammation. The inflammation does not in general appear to have
penetrated

penetrated far into the intestines, nor does the uterus discover any marks of it.

Medical writers seem to have agreed in their opinion respecting the nature and the seat of this disease, although they have attributed it to different causes. Some have traced this fever to the absorption of putrid lochia; others, observing the evident signs of inflammation on the peritonæum and omentum, have attributed it to the pressure of the gravid uterus during the months of pregnancy; whilst others have thought it might be occasioned by the sudden increase of fulness in the vessels of these parts upon the removal of the pressure
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by the birth of the child, and the contraction of the uterus.

It is not consistent with the design of these few pages to enter upon a discussion of these different opinions. The various symptoms which occur in the course of the disease, and the appearance of the parts after death, which are the acknowledged seat of it, correspond in pointing out the inflammation of these parts, by whatever means produced, as the immediate cause of the disease.

We shall now, therefore, proceed to make a few observations on the mode of treatment. At the very commencement of the disease, and before the symptoms of

peritonœal inflammation appear, an emetic has frequently been given with advantage. If a scruple of ipecac. be combined with two drachms of vin. antim. tartar. and this be diluted with two ounces of aq. menth. fativ. a table spoonful may be given and repeated every quarter of an hour, till vomiting be excited. A nausea continued for some time in this way, before vomiting is produced, has often a very good effect.

It is of considerable importance in this disease to pay as early an attention as possible to the state of the intestinal evacuation. We have observed, in the enumeration of symptoms, that a diarrhœa frequently

quently occurs, and that this sometimes appears to be an effort of nature for her relief. If it, therefore, do not occur, it will be highly proper, by the use of some cathartic medicine, to procure a thorough evacuation of the bowels.

The saline cathartics seem particularly well adapted to the present case. *Natr. vitriolat.*, *magnes. vitriolat.*, or *kali tartarif.* may be used with advantage. *Ol. ricini*, when it can be taken in sufficient quantity without disagreeing with the stomach, may also be employed. The injection of an enema may answer the double purpose of an internal fomentation, and of an auxiliary to the operation of the cathartic medicines.

I have sometimes combined the emetic mixture before mentioned with a solution of the neutral salts, to secure its effect upon the bowels, as well as to produce an evacuation from the stomach.

When symptoms of peritonœal inflammation appear, the first object of attention is the reduction of this inflammation. Venesection, as the most powerful means of effecting this, has accordingly been employed, in many instances, with considerable advantage. The necessity of using the lancet must however be determined by the degree of inflammation as indicated by the pulse, by the general habit of the patient, and by the state of other discharges going on at the time.

If

If the propriety of this practice should, in any case, be doubtful, a number of leeches may be applied to the abdomen.

The circumstances under which I have found general bleeding the most useful, were, when there have been symptoms of an inflammatory affection of the lungs, or a difficulty of procuring a sufficient evacuation from the intestines. In the former case, respiration has been much relieved, and, in the latter, the bowels have sooner yielded to the operation of a purgative remedy.

The different preparations of antimony may be used with advantage; of these, the pulvis antimonialis may perhaps best answer

the purpose of a diaphoretic, if given in divided doses. This may be repeated once or twice a day, and the saline draught may be interposed to keep up the determination to the skin. Fomentations to the abdomen may be frequently repeated.

If any occasional symptoms occur, they must, in course, be treated according to their nature and urgency. In these cases, a cough will sometimes prove very troublesome. This must be alleviated by the mist. oleos. sperm. ceti., or other demulcent remedies. If it continue so troublesome as to fatigue the patient, and to aggravate the other symptoms,

toms, recourse must be had to an anodyne.

If painful micturition should occur, this may be relieved by demulcent and mucilaginous medicines. Barley water may be taken with gum arabic, or lac amygdal. with a small portion of camphor. A few drops of spir. æther. nitr. in any convenient vehicle, will sometimes remove this symptom. If the lochia should be diminished or suppressed, they are not to be forced by heating medicines. The injection of a glyster will often restore this evacuation, or the other means prescribed when treating more particularly of this disease may be had recourse to.

Diarrhœa has been mentioned as an evacuation which nature sometimes employs after the removal of the disease; but if this take place in the later stages of it, and be attended with great reduction of strength, it may be necessary to check it by the occasional use of conf. op., or some other anodyne remedy.



ON MANIA.

A derangement of the intellectual functions sometimes occurs during the puerperal state. Mania, as a genus under which several species are included, may be defined “ a delirium without fever.” When it occurs either in the
common

common way, or connected with the circumstances under which we are now to view it, it assumes very different forms, and appears in various degrees of aggravation, from a simple alienation of mind to the highest degree of rage and fury. This disease generally appears about the 9th or 10th day from the time of delivery, but in some instances it occurs earlier, and in others later.

The manner of its first appearance is various. In some instances, the patient, without any warning, bursts into a sudden passion, and is with difficulty restrained from some act of violence.

In other cases, the first symptom of its

approach is a dulness and inattention to what is going forward, together with marks of mental dejection. Those objects in which she used to discover some interest, she now seems to disregard. This indifference is frequently expressed with respect to her own child. She remits in her inquiries after it, and when put into bed with her, or placed to her breast, she looks upon it as if it were a stranger, or if she had some suspicion about its being changed.

To these, other symptoms of absence or alienation of mind succeed. The patient continues frequently muttering to herself, is inattentive to any question proposed, and

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is with great difficulty persuaded to comply with the requests of her attendants and friends. Persons in this situation will bear very long fasting without any inconvenience, and it is very difficult to persuade them to take the food which is offered them ; or if persuaded to take it, they generally devour it with eagerness. The other calls of nature are also for a long time disregarded.

The disorder sometimes continues throughout in this mild form, and does not amount to any thing more than an apparent insensibility to the usual impressions of external objects : but, in other cases, the disease which commences in this

manner, assumes, in its course, a very different appearance; and the patient discovers such symptoms of fury as make it absolutely necessary to employ means of coercion.

Under these circumstances, she continues without sleep for several nights together, and the mind is as active in the night as in the day. The state of mind, now described, is attended with nearly the same symptoms, under whatever circumstances it appears. That there is some particular cause connected with the present situation of the patient cannot be doubted, as it occurs in subjects very different in their general habits and predispositions,

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and agreeing in no other instance than that of having lately been delivered of a child. What this cause is, however, has never yet been discovered. Different pathologists have ascribed it to different causes. Some have attributed it to a change in the secretion, excretion, or absorption of the milk; but as the state of the breast, and that of the milk, oftentimes remains the same previously to the commencement of the disease, this mode of accounting for it seems insufficient. Others have ascribed it to the suppression of the lochia. That the suppression of any natural discharge, especially if it be sudden, should produce such an effect, would
not

not be surprizing, but we must remember that this frequently occurs at a period subsequent to that at which the lochial discharge usually ceases.

It has been suggested that this disease may have its source in some injury done to the brain, during the pains and exertions of a tedious or severe labour. This seems as probable a cause as any of these which have been assigned ; but, as what is here supposed to be the cause, is not invariably, or even frequently, connected with the effect, this hypothesis, though it may be admitted as fairly as any other, must yet be acknowledged to be attended with some difficulty. In this, as in many other cases, we must be

contented

contented to acknowledge our ignorance of the proximate cause, and regulate our plan of treatment by those circumstances and symptoms which are more within the reach of our senses and observation.

It is of some importance, in these cases, to trace the disease from its commencement, and even to look back to the state of the patient, previous to the first appearance of direct insanity. If the disease were preceded by a state of melancholy, or even a common dejection of spirits, and if this can be traced to a cause immediately affecting the mind, without the intervention of any bodily malady, there is but a slender

hope

hope of any aid being derived from medicine. In the cases of mania which occur during the puerperal state, there is some reason to hope that a recovery may be obtained, as the change in the mental, seems to be connected with a change in the animal, functions ; and though we cannot discover the specific cause, whilst we observe this connection we may hope that some favorable alteration in the animal system may be attended with a correspondent change in the mental economy. Accordingly we find that frequently in a few weeks, or, at the longest, in a few months, the patient recovers to a healthy state both of body and mind,

It

It must be observed, however, that women sometimes die in child-bed under circumstances, in some respects, very similar to those which have been described: but in these cases, besides this general derangement of intellect, there is always a high degree of fever either preceding these symptoms, or taking place in the course of the disease. Instead of that torpor or insensibility to the impression of external objects, before mentioned, there is a morbid sensibility, particularly to that of light and noise. The disease, therefore, under this form, assumes the character of phrenitis, rather than of mania. This state of mind, in other cases, has been succeeded
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by an apoplexy of which the patient has died. Whilst so much ignorance of the nature and cause of this disease remains, the method of cure must be adapted to the general state of the constitution, and to the symptoms, which may appear the most urgent. When there are evident signs of a general plethoric state, it will be proper to liberate the system by taking away a few ounces of blood from the arm. This is particularly necessary in the state of phrenitis just referred to, and may be repeated according to the urgency of the symptoms, or the advantage which was derived from the former bleeding. If the fulness should be rather local than
general,

general, if there be a determination to the head, indicated by a very florid countenance, a ferrety eye, or strong pulsation of the temporal arteries, cupping, or bleeding by leeches at the temples, will be very proper. This plan may be adopted either alone, or in addition to the general bleeding just recommended. For the purpose of diminishing fulness or excitement, purging must be employed. In cases of mania, it is always found exceedingly difficult to act upon the stomach or intestines. Even large doses of emetic and cathartic remedies, that would have produced most violent effects upon another, have hardly any effect upon a maniac.

A mixture

A mixture, containing a few grains of antim. tartariz. with a drachm of pulv. ipecac. may be taken in divided doses, so as to produce nausea, and, if vomiting be not produced, it may procure a few stools. Where inflammation, however, prevails, this effect of exciting nausea, and procuring stools, is more desirable than that of active vomiting. Where vomiting has been excited, and no purging has attended, it will be proper to administer some active cathartic, with a view to promote a thorough evacuation of the intestines. A solution of the neutral salts will be highly proper where inflammation and fever are present; or in the case of mania, this may
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be combined with tinct. jalap. or with a few grains of scammony.

Extr. colocynth. comp., as an active cathartic, may be employed on these occasions. Shaving the head, and applying a blister, has sometimes had a good effect. Camphor, with nitre, or with vinegar, has been often used. Kali tartarifat. has been recommended; and a long continuance of it, in small doses, has been supposed to act as an alterative. Experience, however, of the frequent inefficacy of these medicines, forbids our entertaining any high expectations from them. Whether the use of opium, in cases of mania, be proper, has been doubted. As the want of sleep, is so prominent

prominent a feature in this disease, the trial of any means to procure this may be allowed.

I have observed a large dose of opium sometimes followed by sound sleep, but upon awaking from this, the patient has returned to the same state. In other cases, the use of opium has proved injurious, and instead of promoting sleep, has increased excitement, and aggravated the disease.

In these cases I have generally preferred the use of Hoffman's anodyne, combined with camphor.

Cold bathing has been recommended, as having in some cases even produced a cure. In order to give it every advantage,

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it has been proposed suddenly to plunge the patients, so as to produce the greatest degree of surprize, and to detain them so long, as to excite a fear of drowning. In the cases in which I have seen it used, I have not observed any permanent advantage derived from it. When warm bathing has been employed, it has been thought necessary to keep the head cool by the affusion of cold water, or by the application of snow or ice.

Digitalis will, sometimes, produce a temporary suspension of the symptoms of increased excitement.

If mania has occurred after a sudden suppression of the lochia, or of any other evacuation;

evacuation; this must, if possible, be immediately restored.

When other means prove ineffectual, the patients must be placed under proper discipline. To give this its full effect, it is advisable to remove them from their own habitation, and from any intercourse with those with whom they have been familiar. The most complete change of customs and habits that can be introduced, is advisable. A confinement to hard labour has been recommended, in order to engage the attention, and, it is said, there have occurred instances of recovery, during a long journey.

ON PHLEGMATIA DOLENS.

THIS disease consists of a white, tense, elastic, and painful tumour of one or both of the lower extremities, occurring to women soon after parturition. The following may serve as a brief history of it. Sometimes, within a few days, but

more commonly in about a fortnight, after a woman has been delivered, she complains of a pain in the upper part of one of the thighs, extending to the region of the ilium, or more particularly fixing in the groin. This pain, though attended with fever, is not always preceded by a distinct cold fit, but a slight chilliness or shivering frequently accompanies it in its whole course. The part gradually swells, becomes hard, and tense. The tumour begins in the superior part of the limb, where the pain was first felt, and gradually extends down the thigh, to the knee, leg, and foot; and in two or three days time the whole limb is swelled to twice its original size.

Sometimes

Sometimes one of the labia pudendi is included in the general tumour. This symptom is so frequently attendant upon the disease, that it has, by some, been considered as an essential part of it; but, as it is not a constant symptom, it need not enter into the definition, though it may form a part of the natural history of the disease. During this state of swelling and tension, there is great tenderness of the part, though the surface does not exhibit any sign of inflammation, being for the most part of a pale white. The principal seat of the pain is the groin, the ham, and the calf of the leg. In the description of this disease, a considerable resemblance

to anasarca, or dropfy of the limb, is observable : but the difference will appear very striking, when we remember, that where anafarcous fwellings occur, they generally affect both the lower extremities at the fame time. In the present difeafe, if the other limb be affected, which is but feldom the cafe, the change does not appear, till it has, in fome meafure, difappeared in that in which it was firft obferved. In instances of common anasarca, the fwelling begins at the lower part of the extremity ; the feet and ancles firft difcover the difeafe, and the fwelling gradually arifes towards the fuperior part ; but we have feen that the œdema, now under confideration,

sideration, begins at the superior, and terminates at the inferior part of the limb. In dropfical fwellings, the parts are generally cold, and soft, and retain the imprefion of the finger for some time; all which are different from what has been observed refpecting the other difeafe. The horizontal pofture, generally, diminifhes the fwelling in the lower part of the anafarcous limb; but this does not produce any effect in the other cafe. This variety forms a fufficiently clear diftinction between the two difeafes.

This complaint, though the recovery from it is fometimes flow, very feldom, if ever, proves fatal; nor is the ftructure of
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the part at all injured by it. It has been said, that sometimes the swelling terminates in suppuration, but this is a rare occurrence. As the progress of this tumour differed from others, by commencing in the superior, and proceeding to the inferior part of the limb, so it observes this course in its leaving the part; it first subsides in the superior, and gradually grows less and less in the leg and foot, till the whole disappears. This disease, having once affected a patient, is very apt to recur on similar occasions.

Much curious disquisition has been indulged in attempting to ascertain the cause of this disease. French writers have
attributed

attributed it wholly to the absorption of the milk, and have accordingly given it the name of *dépot laiteux*: this theory, however, is, at present, generally exploded.

Some have attributed this enlargement of the limb to the pressure of the child's head upon the trunk of the lymphatics, as it passes into the pelvis. Others have considered it as the effect of inflammation in the lymphatic system; whilst others again have referred it to an effusion, produced during inflammation of the parts, independently of any primary affection of the lymphatics.

Without entering farther into this part of the subject, I shall proceed to some
practical

practical observations on the mode of treatment.

Amongst the instances of this disease which have fallen under my care, I have seen very few, in which the use of the lancet has been necessary. This, it is generally allowed, if at all employed, is proper only at the commencement of the disease, and then only when there is the appearance of considerable inflammation. It is, however, very frequently necessary to empty the vessels going to the diseased limb by the application of a number of leeches. With a view also to reduce the inflammation of the part, the use of cathartic remedies becomes highly necessary.

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The neutral salts will produce a considerable evacuation from the bowels, not only by emptying them of the fæces which have been retained, but also by exciting the exhalents to throw out a larger quantity of fluid, and increasing the disposition to lymphatic absorption. Diuretics may also be employed with a similar view. Aq. ammon. acetat. may be taken, either in combination with mist. camph. or in a more simple form of dilution, by some aqueous fluid. In the more advanced stages of the disease, scilla, in the different forms, in which it is employed, will prove an useful auxiliary. This is often most efficacious, when combined with a
small

small quantity of calomel in the form of a pill, and the use of it continued till the state of the mouth indicates that the calomel has got into the habit.

When the symptoms of inflammation have subsided, and the tumor of the limb seems to be accompanied with signs of weakness and relaxation rather than of inflammation and tension, the use of a gentle tonic is often advantageous. In these cases, the fossil class are to be preferred. Ferrum vitriolatum, given in very small doses, and continued for some time, has been found very useful, when, together with the local affection, there have been symptoms of general debility.

External

External applications are often highly serviceable in these cases. Sal. ammon. in acet. distillat. solut. forms a very good lotion for the affected part. If redness and inflammation appear on the surface, the saturnine lotions may be preferred. Aq. lithargyr. acetat. comp. may be used with advantage. Gentle friction of the part with oil has also been serviceable.

When the appearances of inflammation and distension have subsided, and the parts yield more readily to the impression of the finger, linim. ammon. or linim. camph. may be sprinkled on linen or woollen rags, and applied to the part. In this state of the limb, a spiral bandage, dexterously applied,

applied, will strengthen it, and enable the patient to use it more freely.

As soon as she can be removed without pain, moderate exercise in that way in which it can be used with least inconvenience, is an important part of the curative plan, and if this be taken in the country, the change of air will conspire, with other means, to complete the cure, and restore the patient to her former health.

F I N I S .



