

Observations on the discovery of the original obstetric instruments of the Chamberlens / by Robert Lee.

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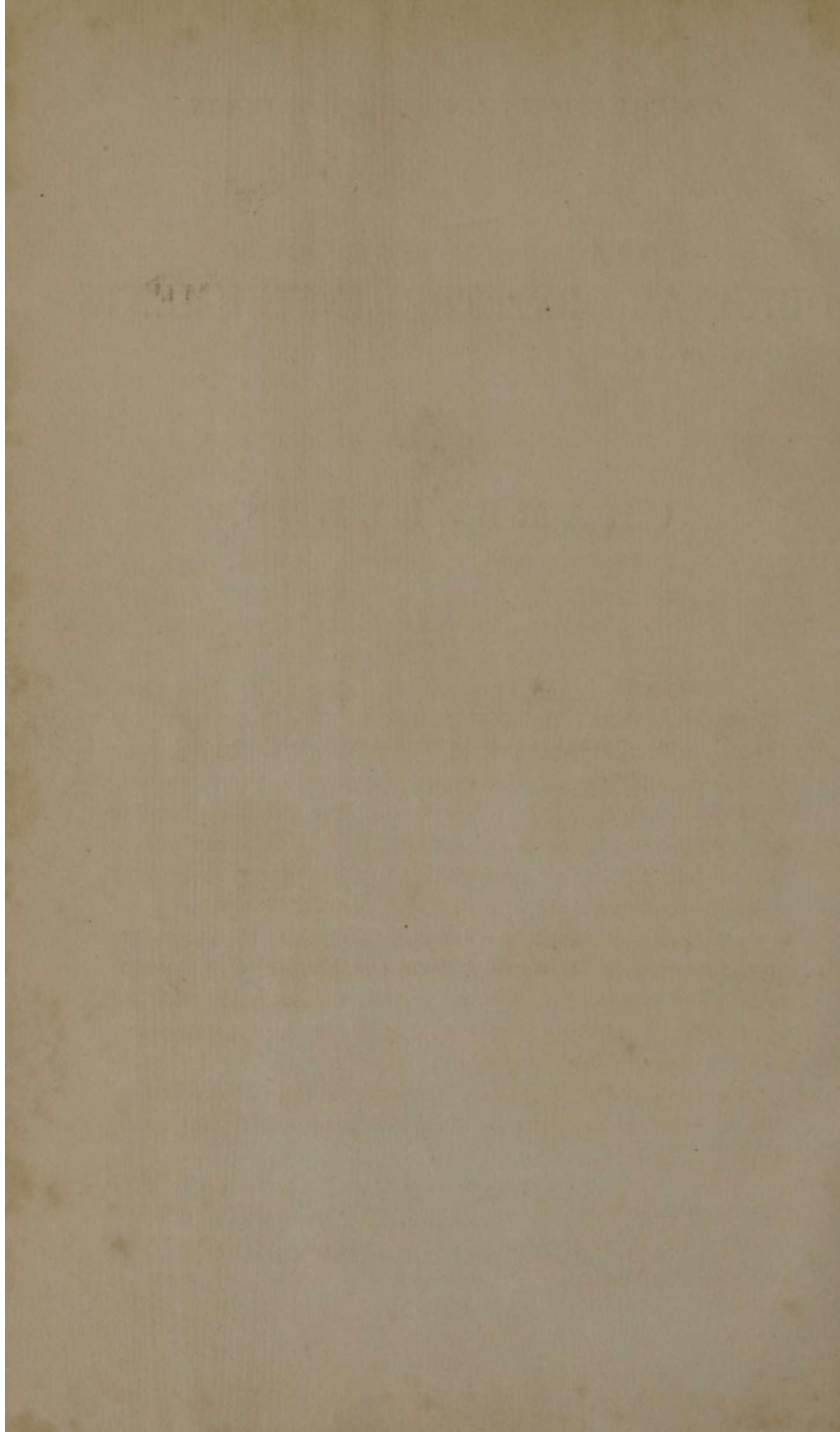
OBSERVATIONS ON THE DISCOVERY
OF THE
ORIGINAL OBSTETRIC INSTRUMENTS
OF THE
CHAMBERLENS.

BY
ROBERT LEE, M.D., F.R.S.,
OBSTETRIC PHYSICIAN TO ST. GEORGE'S HOSPITAL.

*[From Volume XLV of the 'Medico-Chirurgical Transactions,'
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ROBERT LEE, M.D., F.R.S.,
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Received Oct. 17th.—Read Nov. 12th, 1861.

THE operation of turning, in cases of arm and placental presentation, the invention of the midwifery forceps, and the induction of premature labour, must be regarded as three of the most important improvements which have hitherto been made in the practice of midwifery, and every circumstance connected with their introduction cannot fail to excite interest with those who study and practice midwifery as one of the great departments of medical science. Before the year 1818, when Mr. Carwardine presented a brief notice to the Medical and Chirurgical Society, with the original obstetric instruments of the Chamberlens, nothing was known with certainty respecting the invention of the forceps.

The first notice of the discovery of the Chamberlens, that I have met with, is contained in the following case, related by Mauriceau :

OBSERVATION XXVI.—D'une femme qui mourut avec son enfant dans le ventre, qui, n'en put jamais etre tiré par un Médecin Anglois qui avoit entrepris de l'accoucher.

Le 19 Aout, 1670 (says Mauriceau) j'ai vu une petite

femme, âgée de 38 ans, qui étoit en travail de son premier enfant depuis huit jours, ses eaux s'étant écoulées dès le premier jour qu'elle avoit commencé à se trouver mal, sans presque aucune dilatation de la matrice. Etant restée en cet état jusqu'au quatrième jour, je fus mandé pour en dire mon sentiment à sa sage-femme, à laquelle je conseillai de la faire saigner ; et au cas que la saignée ne produisit pas le bon effet que l'on en pouvoit espérer, de lui faire prendre l'infusion de deux drachmes de sené pour lui provoquer les douleurs qu'elle n'avoit point : ce qui fut fait le jour suivant, et réussit assez bien, ce remède lui ayant excité des douleurs qui dilatèrent la matrice autant qu'il étoit possible. Néanmoins pour tout cela elle ne put jamais accoucher, et son enfant qui venoit la tête devant, mais la face en dessus, resta toujours au même lieu, sans pouvoir avancer au passage, que cette femme, qui étoit très-petite, avoit tellement étroit, et les os qui le forme si serrés et proches l'un de l'autre, et l'os du croupion si recourbé en dedans, qu'il me fut entièrement impossible d'y introduire ma main pour l'accoucher, quoique je l'aye assez petite, lorsque je fus mandé pour lui donner ce secours, trois jours ensuite de la première fois que je l'avois vue : de sorte qu'y ayant tâché inutilement il ne me fut pas possible d'en venir à bout, ne pouvant introduire ma main qu'avec un extrême effort, à cause de l'étroitesse du passage d'entre les os : et l'ayant introduite elle se trouvoit si serrée, qu'il m'étoit impossible d'en remuer seulement les doigts, et de la faire avancer assez pour pouvoir conduire un crochet avec sûreté, afin d'en tirer cet enfant, qui étoit mort depuis près de quatre jours, suivant l'apparence ; ce qu'ayant essayé je déclarai l'impossibilité d'accoucher cette femme à tous les assistans, qui en étant bien persuadés, me prièrent de lui tirer son enfant du ventre par l'opération Césarienne : laquelle je ne voulus pas entreprendre, scachant bien qu'elle est toujours très certainement mortelle à la mère. Mais après que j'eus laissé cette femme en cet état, ne m'étant possible de la secourir, comme j'aurois fait toute autre qui auroit eu une disposition du corps plus naturelle, il survint aussitôt un médecin Anglois,

nommé Chamberlen, qui étoit alors à Paris, et qui de père en fils faisoit une profession ordinaire des accouchemens en Angleterre dans la ville de Londres, où il a acquis depuis ce tems-là le suprême degré de réputation en cet art. Ce médecin voyant cette femme en l'état que je viens de déclarer, et ayant appris que je n'avois pas trouvé aucune possibilité de l'accoucher, témoigna être étonné de ce que je n'en avois pas pû venir á bout, moi, qu'il disoit et assuroit être le plus habile homme de ma profession qui fut à Paris ; nonobstant quoi il promit d'abord de l'accoucher très assurément en moins d'un demi-quart d'heure, quelque difficulté qu'il pût y trouver : pour quoi faire, il se mit aussitôt en besogne, et au lieu d'un demi-quart d'heure, il travailla durant plus de trois heures entières, sans discontinuer que pour reprendre haleine. Mais ayant épuisé inutilement toutes ses forces, aussi-bien que toute son industrie, et voyant que la pauvre femme étoit près d'expirer dans ses mains, il fut contraint d'y renoncer, et d'avouer qu'il n'étoit pas possible d'en venir à bout, comme je l'avois bien déclaré. Cette pauvre femme mourut avec son enfant dans le ventre, vingt-quatre heures après les extrêmes violences qu'il lui avoit faites ; et par l'ouverture que je fis de son corps, en lui faisant après sa mort l'opération Césarienne, que je n'avois pas voulu lui faire, comme j'ai dit, durant qu'elle vivoit, je trouvai son enfant et toutes les autres choses disposées comme je les ai spécifiées ci-dessus, et la matrice toute déchirée et percée en plusieurs endroits par les instruments dont ce médecin s'étoit servi aveuglément sans la conduite de sa main, laquelle pour être une fois plus grosse que la mienne, il n'avoit vraisemblablement pas pû introduire assez avant pour l'en préserver. Néanmoins ce médecin étoit venu d'Angleterre à Paris depuis six mois, dans l'espérance d'y faire fortune, faisant courir le bruit qu'il avoit un secret tout particulier pour les accouchemens de cette nature. Se vantant de faire les plus désespérés et abandonnés en moins d'un demi-quart d'heure : et il avoit même proposé à M. le premier médecin du Roi, que si on vouloit lui faire donner dix mille écus de récom-

pense, il communiqueroit son prétendu secret. Mais la seule expérience de ce fâcheux accouchement le dégouta tellement de ce pays-ci, qu'il s'en retourna peu de jours ensuite en Angleterre: voyant bien qu'il y avoit à Paris de plus habiles gens en l'art des accouchemens que lui. Mais avant que de partir pour Londres, il me rendit visite chez moi, pour me faire compliment sur le Livre des Accouchemens que j'avois donné au Public depuis deux ans: et me dit pour lors, qu'il n'avoit jamais trouvé d'opération si difficile à faire, que l'accouchement de cette femme, dont il n'avoit pas pu venir à bout, me louant de ce que je ne l'avois pas voulu entreprendre aussi inconsidérément qu'il avoit fait. Je reçûs son compliment comme je devois, lui faisant entendre qu'il s'étoit bien trompé en croyant trouver autant de facilité à accoucher les femmes à Paris comme il avoit pû trouver à Londres, où il s'en retourna dès le lendemain, emportant avec lui un exemplaire de mon Livre, qu'il fit imprimer après l'avoir traduit en Anglois, en l'année 1672, depuis laquelle traduction il s'est acquis un si haut degré de réputation en l'art des accouchemens dans le ville de Londres, qu'il y a gagné plus de trente mille livres de rente, qu'il possède présentement, à ce que m'ont dit depuis peu des personnes de sa connoissance. S'il lit quelque jour cette observation lorsque je l'aurai rendu publique et qu'il soit aussi sincère que je le suis, je crois qu'il avouera que je l'ai rapportée avec toute la religion que peut demander une vérité très constante, dont il peut fort bien se souvenir. L'extraordinaire difficulté qui se rencontra en cet accouchement m'a fait inventer un instrument, auquel j'ai donné le nome de tire-tête, par son usage, qui est incomparablement plus commode, et plus sûr que celui des crochets. Si j'avois eu pour lors un pareil instrument, je suis certain qu'avec son aide j'aurois pû sauver la vie à cette femme. J'en ai fait représenter la figure dans mon Livre des accouchemens, ou j'ai enseigné très exactement la manière de s'en bien servir.*

* 'Observations sur La Grossesse et l'Accouchement,' &c., par François Mauriceau, &c., tome ii, p. 23, 1738.

I have not succeeded in obtaining a sight of the first edition of Hugh Chamberlen's translation of Mauriceau's work, and I am uncertain if a copy exists in Great Britain. I have long had in my possession a copy of the 7th edition, published in 1736. On the 27th of August last, my learned friend, Dr. Munk, author of the 'Roll of the Royal College of Physicians, London,' shewed me a copy of the second edition, published in 1696, and gave me an opportunity of comparing the second and the seventh edition; from this it appeared that the seventh was a bare reprint of the second, and there is every reason to believe that the second is a reprint of the first, which, according to Mauriceau, appeared in 1672. The preface to the second edition contains the only account of the midwifery forceps ever published by the Chamberlens. When Dr. Hugh Chamberlen, the translator of Mauriceau's works was born or died I have not been able to ascertain. The 'Roll of the Royal College of Physicians' contains no biographical account of this distinguished physician; but there is an interesting life of Dr. Hugh Chamberlen, to whom a magnificent marble monument was erected in Westminster Abbey by the Duke of Buckingham, on which there is a Latin inscription, which was written by Bishop Atterbury. At the time the translation of Mauriceau's work appeared, this eminent practitioner was only eight years of age, and could not therefore have been the individual to whom Mauriceau refers in his narrative of the unfortunate case at Paris, and the translator of his work—as has been stated in the 'Roll of the Royal College of Physicians,' but the son.

The translation of Mauriceau's work into English, soon became the text-book of all who were engaged in the practice of midwifery in this country, and from this time may be dated most of the improvements in it which subsequently took place in the course of the following century.

As midwifery in Great Britain may now be regarded as in a revolutionary state, and as many sound doctrines established by Mauriceau, the Chamberlens, and their successors, appear to be in danger of being for a time sub-

verted, the preface of the translator may now perhaps be read with advantage.

“THE TRANSLATOR TO THE READER.

“COURTEOUS READER,—Having long observed the great want of necessary directions how to govern women with child and in child-bed, and also how new-born babes should be well ordered, I designed a small manual to that purpose ; but meeting some time after in France with this treatise of Mauriceau (which, in my opinion, far exceeds all former authors, especially Culpeper, Sharp, Speculum Matricis, Sermon, &c.; being less erroneous, and enriched with divers new observations), I changed my resolution into that of translating him, whom I need not much commend, because he is fortified with the approbation of the wardens of the Chirurgeons’ Company of Paris.

“His Anatomy was in the first edition omitted ; but is in this, which, with the book, I have carefully rendered into English, for the benefit of our midwives, of whom many may yet admit of an additional knowledge. The principal thing worthy their observation in this book is, accurately to discover what is properly their work, and when it is necessary to send for advice and assistance, that so, many women and children may be preserved that now perish for want of seasonable help. My author makes out the breaking of the right waters for the proper season of a natural delivery ; and whenever a child is not born then, or soon after, nature is so much short of performing her office. This is certainly a great truth, and all wrong births should never be longer delayed ; and for the most part, floodings and convulsions not so long, lest the woman lose her life before even the water breaks. But if no dangerous accident intervene, in a right labour, one may lengthen out their expectation to twelve hours after ; and though some may have been happily delivered twenty-four hours or two days after, yet I should not advise any to run that hazard, provided they can have an expert artist to deliver them without

destroying the child ; because many have perished in that case ; and it is not prudent to venture where but one of many escapes ; for the longer the labour continues after the breaking of the waters, the weaker both woman and child grow, and the drier her body, which renders the birth more difficult ; and 'tis ever good taking time by the foretop.

“ And that midwife's skill is certainly the greatest, and she deserves most commendation who can soonest discover the success of the labour, and accordingly either wait with patience or timely send for advice and help. Nor can it be so great a discredit to a midwife (let some of them imagine what they please) to have a woman or child saved by a man's assistance, as to suffer either to die under our hand, although delivered ; for that midwife mistakes her office that thinks she hath performed it by only laying the woman ; because her principal duty is to take care that she and her child be well, with safety and convenient speed, parted : and if this be impossible for her and feasible by another, it will justify her better to waive her imaginary reputation, and to send for any help to save the woman and child, than to let any perish, when possible to be prevented : as in the case of my author's sister, and in the twentieth chapter of the first book. Yet, in countries and places where help and good advice are not seasonably to be had, midwives are compelled to do their best, as God shall enable them : which dangerous and uncertain trials it doth not become them to put in practice upon women, where no timely assistance need be wanting. Most wrong births, with or without pain ; all floodings with clods, though little or no pain, whether at full time or not ; all convulsions, and many first labours ; and some others, though the child be right, if little or no pain after the breaking of the waters, and the child's not following them in some six or ten hours after, require the good advice of, and peradventure, speedy delivery by expert physicians in this practice. For though a few may escape in these cases, yet the far greater number perish, if not aided by them. Let me therefore advise the good women, not so readily to blame their midwives who are not backward, in dangerous

cases, to desire advice, lest it cost them dear by discouraging and forcing them to presume beyond their knowledge or strength, especially when too many are overconfident.

“These few things wherein I dissent from my author, if of dangerous consequence, are noted in the margin: if not, are left to the discretion of the reader.

“I confess he is often too prolix—a fault which the French much affect; however, I chose rather to translate him according to his own style, than contract him; and also to leave unaltered some things not very well expressed, being of small moment; I find also he distinguishes not between the words plaister and ointment, but uses them promiscuously, one for the other.

“In the seventeenth chapter of the second book, my author justifies the fastning hooks in the head of a child, that comes right, and yet because of some difficulty or disproportion cannot pass; which I confess has been and is yet the practice of the most expert Artists in midwifery, not only in England, but throughout Europe, and has much caused the report, that where a Man comes, one or both must necessarily die; and is the Reason of forbearing to send, till the child is dead or the mother dying. But I can neither approve of that practice nor those delays; because my father, brothers, and myself (tho’ none else in Europe as I know,) have, by God’s blessing and our industry, attained to, and long practised a way to deliver women in this case without any prejudice to them or their infants, though all others (being obliged, for want of such an expedient, to use the common way) do, and must endanger, if not destroy, one or both with hooks. By this manual operation a labour may be dispatched (on the least difficulty) with fewer pains, and sooner to the great advantage and without danger, both of woman and child. If, therefore, the use of hooks by physicians and chirurgeons be condemned (without thereto necessitated through some monstrous birth), we can much less approve of a midwife’s using them, as some here in England boast

they do, which vast presumption in France would call them in question for their lives.

“In the fifteenth chapter of this book, my author proposes the conveying sharp instruments into the womb, to extract a head, which is a dangerous operation, and may be much better done by our forementioned art, as also the inconvenience and hazard of a child dying thereby prevented, which he supposes in the twenty-seventh chapter of this second book.

“I will now take leave to offer an apology for not publishing the secret I mention we have, to extract children without hooks where other artists use them, viz., there being my father and two brothers living that practise this art, I cannot esteem it my own to dispose of, nor publish it without injury to them, and think I have not been unserviceable to my own country, although I do but inform them that the forementioned three persons of our family and myself can serve them in these extremities with greater safety than others.

“I design not this work to encourage any to practise by it who were not bred up to it, for it would hardly make a midwife, though it may easily mend a bad one. Notwithstanding, I recommend it to the perusal of all such women as are careful of their own and their friends’ safeties, there being many things in it worth their noting. And designing it chiefly for the female sex, I have not troubled myself to oppose or comment upon any physical or philosophical position my author proposes. I hope no good midwives will blame me or my author for reprehending the fault of bad ones, who are only aimed at and admonished in this work; and I am confident none but the guilty will be concerned, and take it to themselves, which I desire they may, and amend.

“Farewell,

“HUGH CHAMBERLEN.

“From my House in Essex Buildings.”

In this preface the author alludes to a secret method of extracting the child.

The secret which is here referred to was the Chamberlen midwifery forceps, but until the year 1818 no one knew with certainty what the invention was. It has been stated in several of the historical accounts published of the forceps, that about seventeen years after the occurrence of the case at Paris, related by Mauriceau, Dr. Hugh Chamberlen was compelled to take refuge in Holland, in consequence of espousing the cause of James II. While in Holland it is asserted that he sold the lever to Roonhuysen as the secret which he possessed; but there is no direct evidence to prove that he parted with the forceps. The vectis was afterwards sold, it is stated, to two Dutch accoucheurs, Reehelman and Ruysch. Chapman asserted in 1734, and Gebbard in 1735, that the forceps was Chamberlen's secret, and they gave representations of the instrument. The forceps of Smellie and Denman did not differ essentially from that of Chamberlen, brought to light in the following extraordinary manner, as related by Mr. Carwardine in the ninth volume of the 'Med.-Chir. Trans.'

*"Brief Notice presented to the Medico-Chirurgical Society, with the original obstetric instrument of the Chamberlens. By H. H. CARWARDINE, Esq.**

"In depositing the obstetric instruments of the Chamberlens among the Archives of the Medico-Chirurgical Society, I beg to offer a few facts and observations, which may serve to authenticate their genuineness and their originality.

"The Estate of Woodham Mortimer Hall, near Maldon in Essex, was purchased by Dr. Peter Chamberlen some time previous to 1683, and continued in his family till about 1715, when it was sold by Hope Chamberlen to Mr. William Alexander, wine merchant, who bequeathed it to the Wine Coopers' Company. The principal entrance to the mansion is through a porch, the masonry of which being carried

¹ 'Medico-Chirurgical Transactions,' vol. ix, p. 1856. Lond., 1818.

up with the building, serves as closets to its respective stories. Two or three years ago, a lady with whom I am intimately acquainted (and from whom I had the particulars) discovered in the floor of the upper closet a hinge, and tracing the line she saw another, which led to the obvious conclusion of a door; this door she soon found means to open. There was a considerable space between the floor and the ceiling below, and this vacancy contained divers empty boxes &c. Among these was a curious chest or cabinet, in which was deposited a collection of old coins, trinkets, gloves, fans, spectacles, &c., with many letters from Dr. Chamberlen to different members of his family, and also the obstetric instruments. Being on terms of intimacy with the family resident at Woodham Mortimer Hall, these instruments have been presented to me, and I have now the gratification of depositing them with your society for the gratification of public curiosity, and to secure to Chamberlen the meed of posthumous fame due to him for his most useful discovery.

“With respect to these instruments, I would briefly observe, that they appear to contain *within themselves* the most direct and conclusive evidence of originality of invention; and that even the progress of this invention may be distinctly traced in its different stages as it passed through the mind of the inventor. First, we have a simple vectis, with an open fenestrum (supposed to be of much more recent invention); then we have the idea of *uniting two* of these instruments by a joint, which makes each blade serve as a fulcrum to the other, instead of making a fulcrum of the soft parts of the mother; and which also unites a power of drawing the head forward. This idea is at first accomplished by a pivot, which being riveted, makes the instrument totally incapable of application. Then he goes to work again, and having made a hitch in each vectis for the joint, he fixes a pivot in *one only*, which projecting, is to be received into a corresponding hole in the other blade, after they have been applied *separately*. It may be observed, that although there is a worm to the projecting part of the pivot, yet there is no corresponding female screw in the hole

which is to receive it. Every practical accoucheur will know that it is not easy, or always possible, to lock the joint of the forceps with such accuracy as to bring this pivot and hole into apposite contact. This Chamberlen soon discovered, and next produced a light and more manageable instrument, which, instead of uniting by a pivot, he passed a tape through the two holes and winds it round the joint, which method combines sufficient accuracy of contact, security, and mobility.

“From the roughness of the workmanship, I am led to conclude that Chamberlen was his own artificer—a practice, I am told, not uncommon in those days, when mystery and empiricism were not regarded as contemptible, even among the enlightened professors of science.

“H. H. CARWARDINE.

“London; February 6th, 1818.”

In the month of July, 1861, I resolved to visit Woodham Mortimer Hall, but before doing so wrote to Dr. May, of Maldon, requesting that he would have the kindness to communicate to me any information which he had obtained respecting Dr. Chamberlen, and the estate which he had purchased in Essex.

Dr. May kindly complied with my request by sending the following interesting letter, which proves the important fact that the concealment of the instruments took place subsequent to the year 1683, when Dr. Peter Chamberlen died.

“Maldon; July 6th, 1861.”

“DEAR SIR,—The following account of the discovery of Dr. Chamberlen’s instruments in June, 1813, I have received from Mrs. Codd, now a resident in Maldon, who was at the date mentioned and for several years previous, resident at Woodham Mortimer Hall, her husband being the occupant of the place.

“Mrs. Kemball, the mother of Mrs. Codd, being on a visit to her daughter in the year mentioned, happened to go into a closet above the entrance porch. She was struck with

the appearance of a cork or a small disc of wood—Mrs. Codd forgets which—in the floor; a second one was then noticed on a level with the boards. On investigation these were found to cover each a screw head. On pursuing the enquiry, a trap door with small sunken hinges was noticed; on elevating this a cavity between the floor and the ceiling was brought to view. This contained some boxes in which were two or three pairs of the midwifery forceps, several coins, a medallion of Charles I or II; a miniature of the Doctor, damaged by time; a tooth wrapped in paper, written on ‘My husband’s last tooth;’ some little antique plate; a pair of ladies’ long yellow kid gloves, in excellent preservation; a small Testament, date 1645. These three latter articles I have seen in Mrs. Codd’s possession.

“The space under the floor is about $5\frac{1}{2}$ feet square, and about twelve inches in depth. There are two pieces of iron projecting from under the boards, with holes in them for the reception of the screws in the trap. This remains now in the same condition as it was when discovered forty-eight years ago. The concealment was evidently made subsequent to the death of Dr. Chamberlen, which occurred in 1683, as the Testament above alluded to bears a manuscript date of 1695. The instruments were taken possession of by Mr. Carwardine, a friend of the family, then a practising surgeon now retired, and residing at Earls Colne Priory, in this county. That gentleman took them to London, and presented some of them either to the Medical and Chirurgical Society, or one of the hospitals. When I was a student at the University of Edinburgh, Dr. Hamilton used to exhibit to his class a pair of what he stated to be the original Chamberlen forceps.

“Dr. F. Ramsbotham, in his work on ‘Obstetric Medicine and Surgery,’ has given an account of the Chamberlen family, and of the discovery of the instruments. In one or two particulars, however, he is incorrect. I send you a literal copy of the inscription and epitaph. The tomb is in tolerable preservation, but some of the lettering is now difficult to decipher. I don’t know that a visit to the spot

would furnish much more information ; but should you feel disposed to make a pilgrimage to the shrine, I shall be most happy to introduce you.

“ Yours very truly,

“ GEORGE P. MAY.”

Inscription on Dr. Peter Chamberlen's Tomb, in Woodham Mortimer Churchyard.

“ Here lyes y^e body of Doctor Peter Chamberlen, who was born on the 8th of May, 1601, and dyed on the 22nd of December, 1683, being aged 82 years 7 months and 14 days. He had 2 wives, and by y^e first, Jane Middleton, had 11 sons and 2 daughters, and amongst them 45 grandchildren and 8 great-grandchildren, whereof were living at his death 3 sons, viz., Hugh, Paul, and John, and his 2 daughters and 20 grandchildren, and 6 great-grandchildren. By y^e second, Ann Harrison, had 3 sons and 2 daughters, whereof only Hope was living at his death, who hath erected this monument in memory of his father. The said Peter Chamberlen took y^e degree of Doctor in Physick in severall Universities, both at home and abroad and lived such above three score years, being Physician in ordinary to three Kings and Queens of England, viz., King James and Queen Anne, King Charles y^e First and Queen Mary, King Charles y^e Second and Queen Katherine, and also to some foreign Princes, having travelled to most parts of Europe, and speaking most of the languages. As for his religion was a Christian, Keeping y^e Commandments of God and faith of Jesus, being baptized about y^e year 1648, and Keeping y^e 7th day for y^e Sabbath about 32 years.

“ To tell his learning and his life to men
 Enough is said, by here lyes Chamberlen ;
 Death my last sleep, to ease my careful head,
 The grave my hardest, but my easiest bed ;
 The end of sorrow—labour and of care,
 The end of trouble, sickness, and of feare.
 Here I shall sin no more—no more shall weep,
 Here's surely to be found a quiet sleep ;
 Death's but one night, my life hath many seene
 My life brought death—death brings me life againe
 Seeds rise to trees—hearbes rise again from seed,
 Shall bodies then of men obtain worse speed ?
 We dayly dye entomb'd in sleep and night,
 But in the morning we renue our light ;

Hence spring my joyes and comfortes evermore
 I cannot feele but what Christ felt before.
 Wee now believe, and heare, and talk by guess,
 Then I shall see, and what I see possess ;
 And when I wake wrapt in Eternal light,
 Of God and Christ, I know no more of night ;
 Crown'd with eternal glories ever blest,
 Oh ! happy rest that brings me all the rest.
 Bodies calcin'd to iemms like stars shall sing,
 Ravish'd with joyes and praises of my king,
 Praised be God my Saviour, Praise his name
 Angels and Saintes sing with me his fame.

“ These verses were found, made, written and ordered by Doctor Peter Chamberlen, here interred, for his Epitaph.”

On the 12th of August 1861, I made a pilgrimage to the tomb of Dr. Peter Chamberlen along with Dr. May, and we carefully examined the closet in which the instruments had been so long concealed. It was empty, but the description of it given by Dr. May I found in every particular most correct.

The tomb is in a dilapidated state, and the inscription will soon be illegible if not renovated. I wrote to the court of the Coopers' Company, to whom the estate now belongs, entreating them to prevent the entire destruction, by time and the influence of the atmosphere, of the monument placed over the grave of one of the most illustrious individuals this country has ever produced ; but the worshipful Company declined employing their funds for such a purpose.

At my visit to Maldon I was introduced to Mrs. Codd, and saw the New Testament and the yellow gloves referred to in Dr. May's letter.

“ West House, Maldon ; Aug. 19th, 1861.

“ DEAR DR. LEE,—I copy from the title page of the Testament, the following :

“ Imprinted at London by ROBERT BARKER,
 Printer to the King's Most Excellent Majestie,
 and by the
 Assignees of John Ball (or Bell) 1640.’

“ On the fly-leaf is a heading, as below :

“ ‘1695, June ☉ 9’

“ This is followed by two or three lines of manuscript (evidently bad writing) which I cannot decipher.

“ Mrs. Codd is quite positive as to the Testament being found with the other relics, which proves beyond doubt that they were not placed there by the doctor's hand, at any rate some one had access to them afterwards.

“ If I can be of service to you in any way in this matter, I shall feel pleasure in rendering such assistance.

“ Believe me,

“ Yours faithfully,

“ GEORGE P. MAY.”

Inscription on the Monument in Westminster Abbey to Dr. Hugh Chamberlen (not the translator of Mauriceau.)

“ HUGO CHAMBERLEN,

Hugonis ac Petri utriusque Medici

Filius ac Nepos :

Medicinam ipse feliciter excoluit et egregiè honestavit,

ad summam quippe Artis suæ peritiam,

summam etiam in dictis et factis fidem,

insignem mentis candorem,

morumque suavitatem adjunxit ;

ut, an languentibus, an sanis acceptior esset,

an medicus, an vir melior,

certatum sit inter eos,

qui in utroque laudis genere primarium fuisse

uno ore consentiunt.

Nullam Ille medendi rationem non assecutus,

depellendis tamen puerperarum periculis,

et avertendis infantium morbis,

operam præcipuè impendit ;

eâque multoties cavit,

Ne illustribus familiis eriperentur hæredes unici,

ne patriæ charissimæ cives egregii :

universis certe prodesse quantum potuit, voluit.

adeòque distractâ in partes Republicâ
cum iis a quorum sententia discessit
amicitiam nihilominus sanctè coluit,
artisquè suæ præsidia lubens communicavit.

Fuit Ille

tantâ vitæ elegantîâ ac nitore,
animo tam forti tamque excelso,
indole tam propensa ad munificentiam,
specie ipsâ tam ingenuâ atque liberali,
ut facile crederes

prosapiæ ejus nobilem aliquem extitisse auctorem,
utcunque ex præclarâ stirpe veterum Comitum de Tankerville
jam a quadragentis Illum annis ortum nescires.

In diversâ quam expertus est Fortunæ sorte,
quod suum erat quod decuit semper tenuit:
cum magnis vivens haud demissè se gessit,
cum minimis non asperè, non inhumanè;
utrosque eodem bene merendi studio complexus,
utrisque idem æquè utilis ac charus.

Filius erat mirâ in Patrem pietate,
pater filiarum amantissimus quas quidem tres habuit,
unam è prima conjuge,
duas ex alterâ, castas, bonas, matrum simillimas;
cum iis omnibus usque ad mortem conjunctissimè vixit:
tertiam uxorem sibi superstitem reliquit.

Ad humaniores illas ac domesticas virtutes tanquam cumulus accessit,
rerum Divinarum amor non fictus,
summa Numinis ipsius reverentia;

quibus imbuta mens exuvias jam corporis depositura,
ad superiora se erexit,

Morbi diutini languioribus infracta permansit:
et vitam tandem minimè vitalem,
non dissolutè non infructuosè actam,
morte verè Christianâ claudens,

ad patriam cœlestem migravit; obiit 17 Junii A.D. 1728:
annis sexaginta quatuor expletis;
provectiori ætate sane dignus,
cujus ope effectum est,
ut multi non inter primos penè vagitus extincti
ad extremam senectutem possit pervenire.

Viro integerrimo, amicissimo,
obs servatam in partu vitam,
ob restitutam sæpius et confirmatam tandem valetudinem,

Monumentum hoc Sepulchrale
eujus effigie insignitum posuit
Edmundus Dux Buckinghamiensis,
appositis hic inde statuis
ad exemplum marmoris antiqui expressis,
quæ et quid ab ille præstitum sit
et quid Illi redditum licet
adhuc debetur posteris testatum faciant.

JOHN SHEFFIELD, Duke of Buckingham,
died in 1720.

This Dr Hugh Chamberlen was physician to Charles II.
He was admitted a fellow of the Royal Society on
November 2nd, 1681.

APPENDIX TO DR. LEE'S PAPER,

CONTAINING

LETTERS FROM DR. MUNK, DR. MAY, AND MR. CARWARDINE,

RELATIVE TO

DR. PETER CHAMBERLEN AND HIS FAMILY.

"Finsbury Place; July 4th, 1861.

"MY DEAR DR. LEE,—I am painfully conscious of the incomplete and very unsatisfactory character of the information which I have been able to put together concerning the Chamberlens. To unravel the obscurity, and I believe it may be done, would require much search and involve a long essay, for neither of which could I find time until the 'Roll' is completed. Then, if no one else takes up the subject, I will see what can be done, but I really wish you would yourself undertake it, and any assistance I could give, you may command.

"I see the way how the matter is to be elucidated, and when I have the pleasure of seeing you will expound to you my views. There is much in the annals of the college about Peter Chamberlen, M.D., and his father. The latter practised as a surgeon-apothecary in the city, and, as far as I can make out, had no mean reputation as an accoucheur. To me it seems clear that Hugh Chamberlen, M.D. ('Roll,' vol. i, p. 359), did practise midwifery, if only from the following passage in the inscription on his monument (p. 461.)

"*'Nullam Ille medendi rationem non assecutus, depellendis tamen puerperarum periculis et avertendis infantium morbis operam præcipuè impendit; eâque multoties cavit, ne illustribus familiis eriperentur hæredes unici, ne patriæ charissimæ cives egregii.'*

"The whole matter is full of interest; it ought to be

cleared up, and none so proper to undertake it as yourself. Pray do so, and make any use you can of

“Yours always truly,

“W. MUNK.

“Dr. R. Lee.”

“Finsbury Place ; July 20th, 1861.

“MY DEAR DOCTOR,—I have only time to thank you for the copy of the inscription, which I will soon return.

“I think I see my way more clearly. Hugh Chamberlen, the son of Peter, and the father of Hugh, whose monument is in Westminster Abbey, must have been the translator of Mauriceau. If this turns out to be the case, and I have little doubt upon the matter, you will find that Peter, of Woodham Mortimer, was the inventor of the forceps.

“Yours always truly

“W. MUNK.

“Dr. Lee.”

“MY DEAR DR. LEE,—Your note of the 22nd has been forwarded to me from the college, and you have, I presume, in the interval received one from me, in which I show that there were two Hugh Chamberlens, both physicians. The elder of the two was undoubtedly the translator of Mauriceau. He was the son of Peter Chamberlen, M.D., who died and is buried at Woodham Mortimer, and is the Hugh mentioned in Peter's inscription as one of his three surviving sons. He was not a member of the College of Physicians. The second Hugh is the one mentioned in ‘The Roll,’ vol. i, p. 459. He was the son of Hugh, the translator of Mauriceau, and the grandson of Peter, of Woodham Mortimer, or, in the words of the inscription in Westminster Abbey, ‘Hugonis ac Petri utriusque medici, filius ac nepos.’

“The second edition of the translation of Mauriceau, by Hugh Chamberlen, is now before me; it was published in 1696, and seems to me to be a mere reprint of the first. The translator's address to the reader, which is the all-important part, is certainly reprinted without alteration from the first. The first edition was published, I believe, but am

not sure, as you say, in 1672; when Peter Chamberlen, the translator's father, was still living; hence his apology for maintaining the secret of the forceps, that it was possessed by his father and two brothers then living. The father, Peter Chamberlen, died in 1683, yet the same statement occurs in the second edition, anno 1696, as, I suspect, you will find also in your edition of 1736.

"The conviction on my mind grows stronger the more I go into the question, that Peter Chamberlen was the inventor of the forceps, and that he communicated it to his three sons who survived him, all of whom, it is clear, practised midwifery ('my two brothers and myself,' writes Hugh, in his address to the reader), viz., Hugh, the eldest, the translator of Mauriceau, Paul, who is known to have done so, and John, of whose history or career but little, I suspect, is now to be recovered.

"I wish you well through your dissections. I hope soon to avail myself of your kind offer to see with my own eyes this additional instance of the immense importance of visceral nerves.

"Yours always most truly,

"W. MUNK.

"Finsbury Place; July 24th, 1861."

"Finsbury Place; August 17th, 1861.

"MY DEAR SIR,—I congratulate you on your visit to Woodham Mortimer—in other words, your pilgrimage to the shrine of the great Peter Chamberlen, for great he was, if, as I get more and more convinced, *he* was the inventor of the forceps. I shall look to see all the mysteries cleared up in your intended paper, but depend upon it that no view will bear examination but that which assigns the discovery or invention to Peter.

"I wrote, telling you of my having seen the second edition of the English Mauriceau. I have not had the good fortune to find the first.

"Yours always truly,

"W. MUNK.

"Dr. Robert Lee."

“Colne Priory; September 7th, 1861.

“DEAR SIR,—Absence from home must apologise for not having sooner acknowledged your kind attention in sending me a copy of the engravings from your elaborate and, I doubt not, very accurate dissections of the nerves supplying the heart and uterus, a valuable addition to our knowledge on that subject, which, I trust, will be justly appreciated by teachers and students. I have now withdrawn from practice some years, being in my eighty-third year, and so nearly blind that it is with much difficulty and uncertainty that I write a few lines, and must trust to your indulgence to correct or excuse blunders.

“With respect to Chamberlen and his obstetric instruments, I wish it were in my power to answer your inquiries in a more satisfactory manner; I did not know of the discovery till some time after it had been made. From my friend then residing at Woodham Mortimer Hall I begged the instruments, for the purpose of depositing them in some museum, where they might be open to the inspection of professional men, &c., and wrote a brief memoir of the discovery, published in the ‘Medico-Chirurgical Transactions,’ on presenting them to that society (by a misprint my name is there given as *Cansardine*). I heard something about the MS. petition to Parliament which you allude to, but never saw it; from what I heard Dr. Gooch say in his lectures, some such document must once have been in his hands. What became of it after I know not.

“The lady you mention as having been at Maldon must have been Mrs. Codd, widow of our late coroner for the county (then residing at Woodham Mortimer Hall), and daughter of my old friend, Mrs. Kemball, who discovered the secret recess where these curiosities were deposited, so that you were on the right track for the most accurate information. Were I enabled to supply you with anything more to the purpose, it should be at your service from

“Dear sir, yours very truly,

“H. H. CARWARDINE.”

"Finsbury Place; September 16th, 1861.

"MY DEAR DR. LEE,—I have just found out that the *great* Peter Chamberlen received his preparatory education at Merchant Taylors' School, and there is extant an engraved portrait of Paul Chamberlen, R. White del., S. Trotter sc., from an original drawing, said to have been taken in 1655.

"Little by little we shall get together some particulars of the personal history of the various members of this really distinguished family. It is an amusement to my *horæ subsecivæ* to ferret out these little incidents. I only hope I do not *bore* you.

"You have, I hope, got your copy of my second volume.

"Yours always truly,

"W. MUNK.

"Dr. Lee."

"West House, Maldon; September 27th, 1861.

"DEAR DR. LEE,—I return the MS. you kindly lent me, with many thanks for the opportunity of perusing it. It contains much matter of special interest, and does much in supplying the deficient links in the great Chamberlen chain. With yourself, I doubt, however, if the publication would excite a general interest. I notice the flattering compliment you designed for me in the matter of the dedication, but in the event of publication I should have urged the selection of a name which would have a higher claim for emblazonment in fame's annals than the humble one I bear.

"In the MS. you have the following note:—'This Dr. Hugh Chamberlen was physician to Charles II.' This must be an anachronism. The Hugh here referred to is Hugh, *nepos*, translator of Mauriceau. Charles II. died 1685, when this Hugh was but twenty, or, at most, twenty-one years old; and he did not graduate until four years after this. Peter, the grandfather, was physician to Charles II (*vide* epitaph).

"We have no photographers here, except one or two of very moderate abilities, so I have taken over to the Hall Mr. Nightingale, an artist of good reputation in his profession, to inspect the tomb and mansion. You will recollect that they cannot both be included in the same sketch. He will execute two small paintings in oils for £5. He says that for this sum he cannot undertake to do very elaborate specimens, but he guarantees they shall be fit to hang up in any apartment. I possess some of his works, and have faith in his statement."

"Believe me, dear doctor,

"Yours very truly,

"GEO. P. MAY.

"Dr. Lee."

NOTE.—Dr. Lee's paper was accompanied by two well-executed oil paintings representing Woodham Mortimer Hall and the Tomb. (*Sec.*)