

great ganglion, and covers a large part of the cervix uteri, and gives origin to the nerves of the vagina and bladder, and many of the rectum. All the blood-vessels of this ganglion have been injected, and an artery passes up from it, with a plexus of nerves, along the whole body of the uterus to the principal trunk of the spermatic vein, close to the ovarium, and there terminates in another ganglion, nearly equal in size to the utero-cervical ganglion. From this spermatic ganglion the fundus uteri is supplied with nerves, and the spermatic nerves are sent off, and which pass up with the spermatic artery and vein to the renal plexus. Besides these ganglia, there are others of great size situated immediately beneath the peritoneum, between which and the spermatic and hypogastric ganglia numerous large plexuses of nerves, accompanied with arteries, pass. But what is represented in this engraving is only the fourth part of the ganglia and nerves of the gravid uterus at the full period; and if it were asserted that these nervous structures bear to the uterus nearly the same proportion that the optic nerve and retina do to the eye, it is probable there would be little exaggeration of the truth. It is chiefly by the influence of these nerves that the uterus performs the varied functions of menstruation, conception, and parturition; and it is solely by their means that the whole fabric of the nervous system sympathises with the different morbid affections of the uterus. If these nerves of the uterus could not be demonstrated to exist; if, as Mr. Hunter asserted, the nerves of the uterus were not enlarged in the smallest degree during pregnancy, and that the brain and nervous system had, as he said, nothing to do with the actions of the uterus, its physiology and pathology would be completely inexplicable.—*Lect. by Dr. R. Lee, Med. Gaz., Oct., 1842.*

MAHON'S PROCESS FOR REMOVING HAIR.

AMONGST the three indications presented for the local treatment of favus, one is to remove the hair from the diseased follicle. Unless that indication is fulfilled, and the hairs are removed, no good can be effected. The old pitchcap is, happily, burnt, and even Plumbe's forceps have gone to rust. The depilatory of the Messrs. Mahon has superseded them; and although the composition is kept secret, and the remedy, therefore, is a quack one, still it must be owned to be successful. Perhaps many of our readers are not acquainted with it. We shall, therefore, give Mr. Erichsen's account of it:—They begin their treatment by cutting the hair at a distance of two inches from the scalp; the scabs are then removed by means of emollient applications and of poultices, and the skin is freed from all impurities, by

means of soap and water. After this has been repeated for several days in succession, an ointment composed of lard and a depilatory powder, the composition of which is kept secret, is rubbed in every second day on the parts that are affected. A fine comb is then passed through the hair on the days on which this preparation is not used, and thus the hair is got rid of gradually and slowly, but without pain. After this plan has been continued for a few weeks, a small quantity of the powder is scattered through the hair, and the combing proceeded with. This is persevered in, according to the severity of the disease, for a longer or a shorter period, and has been found to succeed when every other mode of treatment has failed. It causes no pain, is devoid of danger, and does not prevent the hair from growing, provided the bulbs have not been destroyed. The composition of the ointment and powder is kept a secret, but according to Chevalier, who has analysed them, they consist of slaked lime partly carbonated, of a little silica, alumina, and oxide of iron (probably impurities in the lime), and of subcarbonate of potass, their activity evidently depending upon the lime and subcarbonate of potass that they contain. For the ointment of Mahon we may substitute one composed of 3j of carbonate of potass to 3j of lard, or else a lotion containing 3ij to 3iij of the same salt to 3vj of water, either of which, if used in the way recommended by Mahon, will be found to act as mild and sure depilatories.

M. Petel recommends *Soda* (of commerce), 60 parts; *Slaked lime*, 4; *Lard*, 120. Mix together for the ointment.

Quicklime, 120 parts; *Powdered charcoal*, 8. Mix for the powder.—*Med. Chir. Rev., Oct.*

FAILURE OF CATECHU TO CURE SORE NIPPLES.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Agreeably to the request of Mr. Farr expressed in his letter to *THE LANCET*, I forward to you the result of two cases of sore nipples, treated at first exclusively with the tincture of catechu. One was that of Mrs. L., confined with her first child, on Sept. 3rd. Eight days after the birth she complained of pain in the nipples, which increased to such an extent that whenever she suckled it occasioned her the severest anguish. The nipples were now extensively inflamed, with deep fissures extending from the base to the summit. I had immediate recourse to the tincture, applying it myself, by means of a camel-hair brush, persevering with it for a week, daily, at the expiration of which time the nipples were much hardened, but without any diminution in the pain. I could now no longer prevail upon

my patient to submit to the same treatment, she alleging that it only increased her sufferings.

The second case was that of Mrs. M., a relative of the above, living in the same house, who was confined on Sept. 8th, with her second child. Ten days after her delivery the nipples, which were of full size, became so deeply fissured and inflamed, that she was unable to have the child to the breast but once in twenty-four hours. I here also applied the tincture of catechu for ten days without any decrease in the inflammation or fissures. Thinking that I had now given the tincture a fair trial, I altogether desisted from its use.

As there has been much controversy respecting the tincture of catechu as a remedial agent, I have copied the above cases from my note-book, and will report the result of future cases. I remain, Sir, your obedient servant,

J. R. POTTLE.

Bath-street, City-road.

To the Editor,—Sir, I have treated three additional cases of sore nipple with the tincture of catechu. In two of those cases the remedy failed to afford any relief, but, in the third, which was very mild indeed, being only in the incipient stage, the woman states that her nipples got well under its use, which, in all probability, would have been the case by the application of any other stimulant; so that, in my opinion, it does not excel in virtue either the dilute sulphuric acid, or tincture of myrrh, a mixture which I frequently use in the treatment of the disease. I have now treated five cases, in one of which only has the tincture of catechu been successful, so that the odds against this "specific for sore nipple" are, at least in *my* hands, as four are to one. When the tincture of catechu was first introduced, it was announced as a perfect specific for the cure of sore nipple, and was received with satisfaction and delight by the practitioner in midwifery, as having, at last, furnished him with a remedy for a disease which was most painful to the patient, and most perplexing to the medical attendant, but I fear that the expectations which were conceived of it will not be borne out, notwithstanding the two or three letters which appeared in your Journal confirmatory of all its excellent virtues.

It may be said, by Mr. Horne, of Princes street, for instance, that I used it "injudiciously." If so, then the instructions respecting its use in *THE LANCET* must be given "injudiciously," for I stuck fast to the very letter of the text. But fearing least I should be unjustly condemning, upon my own limited experience, an "invaluable" remedy, I requested Mr. Pottle, of Bath-street, St. Luke's, a very intelligent medical

practitioner, to try it in his practice, and he informs me that he tried it in two cases lately without success. I also requested Mr. Hall, of Paul-street, Finsbury, than whom no man has more ample opportunities of testing the efficacy of any new remedy, being surgeon to the out-and-in-door poor of the parish of St. Leonard's, Shoreditch, to try it in his practice, and he states that he has never found it to do any good.

From this mass of evidence we may safely infer, that the tincture of catechu possesses no more specific powers in curing sore nipple than the tincture of myrrh, or any other gentle stimulant, and, like that, may do good in some light cases. All things considered, I think that no plan of treatment will be found to excel, in severe cases (that is, where the nipple is much ulcerated), that laid down by myself in a former number of *THE LANCET*, namely, the application of the lunar caustic, in substance, the infant being kept away from the breast under treatment until cured, and the draught of milk being excited in it by friction. I would to Heaven that some specific was discovered for this malady; but the question is, Does it admit of a specific? What is the physiology of the complaint? The nipple becomes inflamed in consequence of the irritation produced by suction, and the saliva from the infant's mouth, and ulceration succeeds. If left to itself, nature alone would cure it; but as the infant must be applied to the breast, so is the inflammation increased, and, the adhesions uniting, the breaches are torn down by the child's lips. Will any specific prevent this? No. Will any specific prevent a delicate hand, which is suddenly subjected to hard labour, from becoming blistered? No. The hand continues to work in pain until the skin becomes thickened by the effusion of plastic lymph, and the sensibility is lost. Will any specific cure a fistula in ano without dividing the sphincter? No. The new adhesions are broken down by the dilatation and contraction of the muscle. The healing of the nipple observes the same laws, and, therefore, it can only be cured by preventing the child from sucking it, or by the mother bearing the pain of suckling patiently, until nature cures it by the same process as she hardens the delicate hand. I remain, Sir, your obedient servant,

R. DAVIS.

Worship-square, Oct. 23, 1842.

CATECHU FOR SORE NIPPLES, SUCCESSFUL.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—What a pity it is that in our profession, when once a man takes up with some particular remedy, he becomes so prejudiced in its favour that constant, hammering,