

abdomen quite tympanitic. As contraction of the uterus could not be produced, Mr. Crisp passed his hand into that organ and peeled off the placenta, Mr. D. standing by, to compress the uterus in case of hæmorrhage, but no contraction or hæmorrhage took place. The uterus felt much below its usual temperature; the placenta was putrid and very offensive. The hand was then passed carefully over the interior of the uterus to ascertain if anything remained, but nothing could be felt. A bandage and compress were then applied, brandy and water and ammonia given, and when she was removed to her permanent bed an opiate draught. She slept until the middle of the next day (the 22nd), being part of the time covered with a cold perspiration, and the pulse being almost imperceptible. When she awoke she had beef-tea, and in the evening she felt quite easy, had a warm skin, and a gentle perspiration. She felt thirst, and took effervescing salines with excess of soda. Urine had passed.

23. The countenance appeared less depressed; the skin rather hot; pulse 86, and a little sharp; the compress was removed; the abdomen was slightly tender; the uterus was about half contracted. There had been no discharge. Warm water was ordered to be injected into the vagina frequently. In the evening the tenderness had increased; pulse 92, sharp; abdomen slightly tympanitic; a slight swelling in the right iliac region, which was crepitant to the feel, and like air in the subcutaneous cellular tissue. Twelve leeches were applied, followed by hot bran poultices. A dose of castor oil in the morning. Beef-tea discontinued; gruel substituted.

24. Countenance more cheerful; skin cooler; pulse 92, and softer; abdomen less tender; she had some sleep during the night. Continue the poultices.

25. Pain and tenderness increased; pulse 120; she was lying on her back with her thighs flexed on the abdomen. Eight leeches were applied, followed by bran poultices. Three grains of calomel and a quarter of a grain of opium were given every four hours. In three days the mouth became affected with the mercury; the abdomen became less tender; she could lie without pain on either side; pulse still 120; bowels regular.

From this date to the 2nd of January she continued much the same, having nourishment and a pill of soap and opium at night. There had been a fetid smell, but no discharge from the vagina until to-day. There is now a discharge of fetid matter. An injection of chloride of lime was ordered to be applied frequently. On the 3rd a mortified substance, about three inches in length, protruded, with a spongy feel; slight traction was applied, but it was not moveable.

6. A substance, about a foot and a half in

length, came away to-day. After this she felt more easy, but the urine passed by the vagina. The chloride of lime injection was continued for three or four days, until it produced a little pain and a purulent discharge appeared. From this time she went on gradually improving, several small sloughy portions coming away for a day or two, with occasionally a little purulent discharge. The pulse remained weak for some time; bowels regular, and the fæces passed by the natural passage. The woman recovered her strength, and looked fatter and better after a few weeks than Mr. Darvill had ever before seen her. He then made an examination, and found the vagina about two or three inches in length, ending in a *cul de sac*, without anything like uterus to be felt. The vesico-vaginal partition has disappeared, and he could pass three fingers into the bladder. So large was the aperture that the bladder partly everted itself, showing its mucous membrane.

* * In some conversation which followed the reading of this case, Mr. Crisp stated that after the removal of the placenta he was quite sure that the uterus was quite empty; the uterus felt quite cold and dead. The portion of uterus which had sloughed away was exhibited to the society on the evening that the paper was read. It was of a very irregular shape, about a foot and a half in length, and six or seven inches in breadth. At one part was a distinct fibrous tumour. The preparation had been seen by Dr. Sharpey and Messrs. Quain and Partridge, all of whom concurred in thinking that it was unquestionably the uterine structure. Had the ergot of rye any influence in producing this remarkable condition of the uterus, and its subsequent separation? It occasionally acts by producing local gangrene. Yet would not any such effect from this agent be preceded by its peculiar power of producing contraction of the uterus?

DISEASES OF THE SPLEEN. THEORY OF INFLAMMATION.

To the Editor.—Sir: In my paper on the spleen, published in THE LANCET of October last, I stated that diseases of the spleen exist in this country to a considerable extent; and I now beg to forward this brief abstract of their nature, such diseases being either functional or organic.

Functional.—These are excess or deficiency of the splenic product, leading to excess or deficiency in the secretion of bile. The ancients considered the spleen to be the seat of the *atra bilis*, and it is true, that excessive grief, with pain in the spleen, is often accompanied with unusually dark bile. A deficiency of product gives rise to malarial or splenic dyspepsia, a very common disorder in the low parts of Essex, and requiring for its cure large doses of quinine.

Organic.—The spleen is the subject of a variety of organic diseases: there is atrophy, hypertrophy, solidification, softening, spurious melanosis, the orbicular, and the triangular spleens; all which abnormal conditions I have seen in after-death examinations in man and animals. The subject, however, is so new in pathology, that I have not been able as yet to form any intellectual analysis of the phenomena offered by these diseases before and after death, but must content myself with calling attention to the facts of their existence.

I here wish to remark, that since the proposal of the splenic operation in October last I have not been idle, but have extended my experiments to the monkey and other animals; and, reasoning from analogy of effect in *liver consumption*, this operation would save two out of three in *lung consumption*, or (the deaths from this latter disease being sixty thousand) forty thousand annually in Great Britain alone; in which event it is hardly necessary to observe that it would be the most important operation ever introduced into surgery.

By way of variety, although immediately arising out of my theory of the nutrient circulation, I beg to offer the following theory of inflammation and the inflammatory crust:—

Inflammation consists in this, namely, that the fibrine, &c., which should pass from the *arterial* into the *lymphatic* system, passes into the *venous*, thus constituting the inflammatory crust.

Notwithstanding, Sir, that some tons weight of paper have been expended on inquiries on inflammation, from Galen downwards, I apprehend that its true nature lies in the above few words, as seems at once demonstrated by the obstructed condition of the lymphatics of an inflamed organ. I have no time at present to enlarge upon this "law" of inflammation, so important through all pathology, and which explains, amongst many other hitherto occult phenomena, the interesting fact of the fibrous crust in pregnancy. I am, Sir, your most obedient servant,
FRANCIS EAGLE.

GALVANISM IN DISEASES OF THE EYE.—Several experiments have been made in Germany to ascertain the efficacy of galvanic action in cataract and other structural diseases of this delicate organ. Dr. Neumann has recently published some observations on its *modus operandi* in particular cases, and especially recommends its adoption in cases where the cataract is found adherent to the iris, and in opacities of the cornea. Two pairs of discs, of about two inches in diameter, are represented as being the strongest and best for use, consistently with the necessity for avoiding inflammation by too strong a shock for the organism to bear.—*Casper's Wochenschrift*.

SPERMATOZOA

OBSERVED A

SECOND TIME WITHIN THE OVUM.

WE have this week received the following communication from Dr. Martin Barry, M.D., F.R.S.S.L. and E.:—

Several months since I communicated to the Royal Society the fact that I had observed, and shown to Professor Owen and others, spermatozoa *within* the mammiferous ovum. The ova were those of the rabbit, taken, twenty-four hours *post-coitum*, from the Fallopian tube.*

I have this day confirmed the observation; several ova from the Fallopian tube of another of these animals, in a somewhat earlier stage, having presented spermatozoa in their interior, *i. e.* (as in the first observation), within the thick transparent membrane ("*zona pellucida*") brought with the ovum from the ovary.

London, 31. iii mo. (March) 1843.

WHAT CONSTITUTES RAPE.

To the Editor.—Sir: IN THE LANCET of the 25th ult. (page 933), a correspondent seeks to know how the law now stands as to what constitutes rape, which I may, perhaps, be allowed briefly to answer. Rape is the carnal knowledge of a woman by force against her will. Formerly much doubt existed as to whether carnal knowledge did not comprehend emission, but by the 9 Geo. IV., c. 31, s. 18, this point is so far settled by enacting that the carnal knowledge shall be deemed complete upon proof of penetration only. The question, therefore, which now arises is, what is penetration? and it seems that the law admits the slightest penetration, although the hymen be not ruptured, as constituting the offence. Your correspondent will find cases decided in accordance with this view by referring to 1 East's P. C. 438; 1 Mood. Cr. C. 337 and 342; 1 Russ. C. L. 803; and 4 Car and P. 249. There, however, is one case on record where Baron Gurney held that the penetration was not sufficient, the hymen being unruptured (see 5 Car. and P. 321), I presume to keep up the old charter of the glorious uncertainty of the law.

Your correspondent seems in difficulty owing to having found the hymen perfect. He very properly states that cases of labour have been found progressing, the hymen being unruptured, and cases of this kind will be found mentioned in Davis's "*Obstet. Med.*," vol. ii., p. 104; also LANCET, No. 915, &c. It can hardly be said that impregnation can take place without some degree of penetration, and the same amount of

* See proceedings of the Royal Society, Dec. 8, 1842.