

climates, or amongst ordinary civil communities, and so limited a view of the nature and purpose of military surgery would take from it more than half of the surgical diseases with which its disciples should be familiar; while it would bar it from the domain of prevention for those which only become destructive to life or limb through ignorance and neglect. It is here again that medical and conservative military surgery trenches on the scope and objects of pure military medicine, where sound knowledge regarding the constitutional treatment of diseases is more important than manual dexterity, and where, without it, the military surgeon may be humiliated by failure after the most dexterous operations. In short, military surgery, in its most comprehensive meaning and utility, must embrace *military medicine and hygiene*.

(To be concluded.)

ON SPURIOUS PREGNANCY.

ILLUSTRATED BY CASES.

By W. BURKE RYAN, M.B. Lond.

(Concluded from p. 430.)

CASE 4.—Mrs. —, aged forty, married in October, 1843; of a spare habit of body; generally for years past, of delicate health, which she attributes to fatigue consequent on attending a sick brother during a long illness. She has laboured under a relaxed state of the uvula and fauces, and been leeches, blistered, &c., which perpetuated this state of things, and of which she was subsequently cured by astringents and stimulant gargles with tonics. Her stomach has been generally out of order, her tongue loaded. The first six or eight weeks of her marriage she laboured under a kind of hard, dry, barking cough in the morning, which had been habitual. Previous to marriage she was also affected by varicose veins of the right leg, easily observable when she wore a silk stocking, which she therefore avoided. From these she suffered considerable pain if she walked any distance, and used a bandage for them. Breasts flaccid and very small.

On or about February 12, 1844, four months and nine days after marriage, she observed considerable abdominal swelling, which prevented her stooping in superintending the laying-out of some flower-beds. On examination, I found the abdomen as large as it usually is at about the fourth month of pregnancy. The catamenia had continued up to this time. It struck me as possibly being a case of dropsy supervening on pregnancy, menstruation occurring simultaneously, and I was unwilling to prescribe until the next monthly period, which came a fortnight afterwards, bringing the menstrual flow as usual. The breasts were a little enlarged and painful to the touch. The abdominal swelling was not uniform, being much larger about the right iliac region than any other part: this raised a fear of ovarian dropsy of the right side.

There was no particular areola observable, as the colour of the disc seemed like that of the remainder of the breast; but surrounding the nipple was a ring rather dark, a line and a half in breadth. Ordered powders of bicarbonate and borate of soda with rhubarb night and morning, and, to relieve great lowness of spirits and weakness, a mixture of aromatic spirit of ammonia, four drachms; compound tincture of cinnamon, four drachms; infusion of calomba, a pound and a half: mixed. The sound on percussion was quite tympanitic over the right iliac region. The powders affected the bowels, and the mixture relieved the other symptoms. Having continued the powders during six days, all symptoms were alleviated, and the swelling much reduced. Her skin, which before marriage was dry, is now moist, and a general fulness and plumpness pervades the whole body, with an unusually, for her, healthy feel of the dermoid system. There are dark rings or marks beneath the eyes.

March 20th.—The breasts enlarging; the abdomen is gradually enlarging; the ring round the nipple getting darker; blue veins also observed traversing the breasts, which were not previously noticeable. She formerly used butter, which she now *dislikes*. Ale, which she could never before use, she now *must have* for supper—can drink two glasses, of a strong home-brewed kind, without any injurious effect, which much surprises her, and is quite ashamed of her powers in this way. She also takes her wine, and thinks she should die of lowness if she did not take these good things. *Cheese*, which before always *disagreed with her*, and which therefore she seldom ate, she now likes, and partakes of heartily and with impunity; she likes and eats plentifully of beef. No morning sickness. Though the abdo-

men enlarges, there is no distinct hardness; indeed, when she lies on her back, though the swelling is pretty hard, it appears more that of corpulence than of the circumscribed tumour, the outline of which is sometimes so well defined in pregnancy. At midday she takes a glass of wine, which relieves a sort of "sinking." *The varicose veins of the leg are fast disappearing*; they can in a place or two be felt, and scarcely felt, through a thin stocking, and she can now walk without being affected by the pain of her leg. She looks five years younger; and her friends and visitors, as well as her mother, who herself had six children, are all satisfied of her pregnancy; and although I am myself much inclined to the same opinion at times, yet I still have very strong doubts, and refuse to pronounce for pregnancy. The *embonpoint* is very considerable—quite a contrast to her former appearance. Her morning cough *has for some time left her*; and she who was before marriage always in the habit of taking physic, takes very little now. I looked forward anxiously to her next monthly illness, which commenced on the 26th of March, and lasted the usual time. Her illnesses, the last three times, came on a day or two before the expiration of the fourth week, and she remarks that the flux, although as profuse, has not the consistency of former discharges; of this I satisfied myself from its appearance on the cloths, through which it seems to penetrate more, and it is lighter in colour. A blue pill, and some magnesia and rhubarb, is prescribed occasionally.

April 12th.—I to-day notice that part of the areola, *outside the narrow ring* mentioned above, but instead of a rose or darker colour, it is *whiter and more delicate*, with a silvery appearance, and stretched out, as it were, by the subjacent fulness, more than the surrounding skin.* The narrow circle alluded to is also darker, and spreads in one direction. Within the disk is a growth of four or five hairs, of considerable length and thickness, not before observed. From my not pronouncing for pregnancy, she at this time seemed much alarmed lest she might labour under some abdominal disease, of which she had heard so much.

18th.—Four days since she was attacked with profuse *ptyalism*, the salivation lasting two days. Yesterday and the day before she took a glass of strong ale before twelve o'clock, "which would have killed her a year ago." The salivation returned yesterday evening, followed by severe retching. Severe retching this morning; vomited a glairy fluid of intensely sour smell; the circle increasing and darkening round the nipple, but the outer part of the areola is whiter than the other part of the breast. Although the retching comes on so violently, she does not vomit the ale taken shortly before. Feels occasionally very peevish and fretful; bowels open daily; eats ravenously.

29th.—I have, since the last date, frequently noticed the floating as if of mucus in the urine; *salivation to-day and yesterday*. On Monday last, (22nd,) menses again appeared, lasting only two days; not so deep a colour as usual, more watery, and saturates the cloths more. Size of abdomen sometimes much smaller than at other times. I cannot detect the womb through the abdominal walls. Breasts get softer and smaller at the monthly period, and again increase and harden in a day or two afterwards; areolæ still white, the brown ring not increased: appetite bad during menstrual discharge, but the retching is then altogether relieved. Sometimes takes three half-pints of ale daily, without affecting her head; "feels a greediness in eating never before experienced, and even while eating could cry from peevishness;" has taken a strong desire for sausages; has sometimes felt a quick shooting pain in right iliac region.

May 19th.—Monthly illness commenced to-day; little if any alteration in areola; abdomen tympanitic, and much enlarged within the last eight hours, since menses made their appearance; almost fainted at an evening party, and had to leave the room—never before affected so. On applying the ear to the abdomen, and at the same time moving the bowels, a gurgling sound was heard; stomach, as usual, very little affected during the catamenia. Repeat the powders and stimulant mixture.

31st.—Assuming, in my opinion, a darker tint around the nipples; abdomen firmer to the feel; breasts enlarging. Now fancies pickles, gooseberries, and many different things; peevish; cannot do without ale; feels quite sinking and faint if she do not take it as well as meat.

June 14th.—Catamenia commenced and lasted from Friday

* "It is often difficult," says Dr. Gooch, (Diseases of Women,) "to tell whether the darkened colour of the areola exists or not in persons of light complexion." Dr. Montgomery (Cyclopaedia of Practical Midwifery) considers colour of the areola of all other signs the most liable to uncertainty; and Dr. Rigby (Library of Medicine, vol. ii.) agrees with him that it is one upon which we cannot depend with any great certainty.

morning to Saturday night, thin and watery. A day previous to her illness complained much of weariness, suffering under great prostration of strength, and severe pain in her back and hips. Catamenia usually thus ushered in. Before marriage she suffered much pain *during the time*, but never since.

18th.—Swelling much diminished, to nearly one half.

22nd.—Large as before; but, on careful examination, the womb cannot be felt through the abdominal parietes. The prostration of strength frequently comes on with a feeling of great sickness, and these are at once relieved by eating meat and taking ale or porter, after which she gives expression to the warmest gratitude for the relief experienced from these unpleasant symptoms. She still fears she labours under disease. The case certainly puts on much of the appearance of pregnancy, but more unequivocal signs of pregnancy should have shown by this time; and although the "pale, sickly, and cachectic" appearance, and soft and flaccid breasts of dropsical patients are here absent, thus aiding the diagnosis of pregnancy, still is there against it the backwardness of the areolar signs, the want of increase of moisture and prominence of the glandular follicles, the non-appearance of the deepened shade or apparently raised surface of the areola, the persistence of the catamenia, the indefiniteness of the tumour, the retching not occurring on rising in the morning. The line noticed by Dr. Montgomery is here *well marked*, running from the umbilicus towards the pubis. The rings at the base of the nipples are now about one-sixth of an inch wide, and of such a colour as might be expected by this time to have spread over much of the areola. Vaginal examination objected to.

20th and 24th.—*Severe pyalism* on each of these days. Before the salival discharge comes on she feels very low, and can scarce describe the kind of illness. To use her own words, "It is not in her stomach; it is as if she were half dead, as if no life were in her." This is relieved as the salival discharge proceeds. She frequently says she thinks she has no stomach, inasmuch as after eating and drinking most heartily she feels as if she had taken nothing, and as if she could digest any substance—a thing quite unprecedented with her. The hairs on the breasts have much enlarged, both as to length and thickness.

25th.—*Salivation all this day.*

July 9th.—Catamenia appeared, and remained the usual time, (four days.) From this time all sickness of stomach vanished. Of course my opinion is quite made up against pregnancy, yet here have been a most extraordinary collection of symptoms.

August 5th, (Monday).—Monthly illness came on, and continued until *Friday morning*. She cannot now take ale, as she was wont, nor has she the longing for it, nor does she think it serviceable; it affects her head, even a glassful. From this time everything vanished, suddenly and unexpectedly, even as it came—

"And like the baseless fabric of a vision,
Left not a wreck behind!"

To what, then, are we to attribute the extraordinary combination of symptoms we sometimes meet with? To ovarian irritation, or that, followed or accompanied by inflammation of a subacute character? I allude particularly to those cases of what might be called an ovarian erethism, and in which occur no absolute disease apart from the uterus, such as the liver, &c., but in which, from the first to the last symptom, the health of the female, as in the last of the cases I have noticed, is improved immensely—where, as in that case, she who before had long been ailing and unhealthy, then appeared plump and healthy, as if years had been taken from her age. This patient menstruated regularly during the subsequent five years.

Dr. Gooch* says "there is a torpid state of the uterus, with a flatulent state of the intestines: this is most liable to occur near fifty years of age, when the uterus is about discontinuing its function." The abdomen becomes distended with a flatulent tumour, and the air moving about the bowels gives an inward sensation, which is mistaken for the child. With many symptoms of pregnancy, there is also an anxiety to believe in it as a test of youthfulness. He gives two cases in unmarried females, where symptoms of pregnancy followed coition, but where pregnancy did not exist.

Sydenham, as quoted by Dr. Montgomery, says of this complaint, "it proceeds from flatus, and besides a swelling causes the signs of pregnancy, and happens chiefly to widows, or women that did not marry till they were advanced in years, and such, in their own and midwife's opinion, feel the child move from the customary time to the usual time of delivery," &c.

* Diseases of Women, p. 225.

Dr. Simpson* notes how often phenomena of spurious pregnancy have been observed amongst domestic animals, as well after unsuccessful sexual intercourse, in which I can well imagine it, as after seasons of heat, in which there was no sexual intercourse, and of which I feel that more proof may be desirable. In some of these, phenomena of pregnancy went on to the full term, milk being secreted by the mammæ, with other phenomena of the puerperal state. Dr. Simpson is there reported to have brought forward many facts showing the frequency with which phenomena of spurious pregnancy take place in the human female, and concludes by saying that, as in the virgin state among the lower animals, so do we find them in the unmarried female, "giving rise to symptoms which have hitherto defied any nosological arrangement."

"Spurious pregnancy," says Dr. Montgomery,† is usually observed about the turn of life. The abdominal enlargement progressively increases, partly from deposition of fat in the intestines and in the omentum, but still more from distension of the intestines by flatus, which, passing from one to the other, communicates a sensation like that produced by the motions of a fœtus. The delusion is rendered complete, and almost assumes the character of reality by the occurrence of periodical pains strongly resembling those of labour." He remarks that it is by no means confined to the period usually known as a *certain age*, having met with it in a young woman who had children both before and afterwards.

Dr. Ramsbotham‡ alludes as a cause of such symptoms to a diseased ovarium, to a deposit of fatty matters in the omentum, to a deranged alimentary canal, adding, "Yet, occasionally, after the closest investigation, after the most minute inquiry into all the symptoms, no positive fact can be elicited to warrant the suspicion of any organic disease." He gives the case of a lady, turned forty, mother of a family, who supposed herself pregnant, and who at a certain time was attended by her medical man, a vaginal discharge, accompanied with pain, having come on. Two months elapsed after this without a child making its appearance, the lady still feeling convinced she was pregnant, and, in addition to her own medical attendant's opinion, finding it desirable to have that of Dr. Ramsbotham.

Dr. Simpson thinks the malady connected with the ovary. He could not ascertain the nature of the abdominal swelling in these cases, and thinks the diaphragm the chief agent in it. The chloroform relieves this and the other muscles from the influence of reflex action. He adds that some of these cases could scarcely be placed under the heading of "*hysteria*."

"The name of simulated pregnancy has been given to some cases of hysteria, in which the abdomen enlarges gradually, sickness occurs, and so many signs of an impregnated uterus are present, that time alone can solve the doubts they raise. The catamenia are suppressed, the breasts are tumid, and there is pain in the back."§

Mr. Tate says of these cases:—"In what this enlargement consists I am utterly ignorant; that it is not merely a mere accumulation in the colon I know; that it is substantial I am equally sure." It is, we apprehend, a mixed state of vascular fulness and tympanitic distention.

Dr. Fothergill|| says "the general turgescence, although depending primarily on *retention of the menses*," (which retention, I may remark, is far from being uniform in these affections.) "in the countenance and appearance of the whole habit, denote a general plenitude, but very different from the bloated body of an *hydropic*."

The analogy may be said to hold good between the eggs produced by insects, birds, and fishes, without the intervention of the male, but in that case, as observed by Harvey, infecund, and the bursting of the Graafian vesicle, and the escape of the ovulæ during menstruation in the human female; but although in the latter the orgasm and the nervous excitement is considerable at the menstrual periods, yet we must recollect how different it is to that fearful and maddening revulsion which takes place in quadrupeds during the venereal æstrum, and that should "spurious pregnancy" ever occur without the intervention of the male, it must be in animals in such a state of furor, and not where the passion is so equable as in the human female; and well, indeed, is it for society, that the virgin female, if at all liable, is not so liable as the married woman to such symptoms. Were such symptoms in their every minutæ to occur in the virgin as we can trace them in the married woman, unless in such cases "spurious pregnancy" were an

* Monthly Journal of Medical Science, 1850, vol. ii, p. 90.

† Signs and Symptoms of Pregnancy. Ed. 1837, p. 169.

‡ Op. cit.

§ Cyclopædia of Practical Medicine. Art., Hysteria, by Dr. Conolly.

|| Transactions of the Sydenham Society, 1840.

acknowledged and recognised fact, how her reputation must suffer and her heart feel crushed, and how must she feel towards the erring judge of her cause, that

"Man to man so oft unjust,
Is always so to woman?"

I believe in almost all these cases, either from climacteric, as in case 1, or premature decay, as in case 2, the ovaries are in the position of being susceptible of an *impression* during the marital congress, when the orgasm is extreme and the nervous system is strung to the highest pitch, but that they are unequal to, and sink beneath, the effort subsequently required to carry out the intentions of Nature, even while the Fallopian tubes become erect, and as usual seize the ovaria, as observed by Dumas and Chaussier, with others; and I believe, that although the full intention of Nature be not carried out, a certain impression is made and remains, and that, as if favouring the doctrine of absorption, the female constitution is frequently altered in such cases, a healthy appearance and vascular fullness taking place. I believe that in the unmixed form of "spurious pregnancy," ovarian irritation is predominant, and that the subject offers a fine field to the labours of the physiologist, beautifully showing forth a series of reflex nervous actions, to be worked out upon that system to which Dr. Marshall Hall has given alike a simplicity and a perfection.

Bayswater, May, 1855.

ON

INJURY OF THE VERTEBRAL COLUMN, PARAPLEGIA, &c.

By GRAILY HEWITT, M.B. Lond.,

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(Concluded from page 337.)

Fracture and Crushing of the Eleventh Dorsal Vertebra; Paraplegia; Death eleven weeks after the accident.

CASE 2.—G. T—, aged twenty-four, a well-formed though not muscular man, by trade a carpenter, was admitted into St. Mary's Hospital on the afternoon of Oct. 30th, 1854, under Mr. Coulson. He was found lying on the ground, near a scaffold, incapable of moving, and was brought to the hospital on a stretcher. At two o'clock on that day he was at Maidenhill, on a scaffold forty feet from the ground. The scaffold gave way, and he fell. He does not, however, know whether he alighted on his back, or, in fact, in what position he was on touching the ground, the fall having deprived him of consciousness; he only recollects falling from the scaffold, nothing further. On admission, about one hour after the accident, he was in a state of great prostration, but sensible and capable of answering questions. The skin was cold, the pulse weak; he had lost all power of moving the lower extremities, and the sensibility of both was greatly diminished, that of the left to a greater extent than that of the right; priapism was also noticed. He complained of great pain in the back and over the abdomen. The tips of the fingers of the left hand were denuded of cuticle, and bleeding to a slight extent, and there was a small abrasion of the skin over some of the spinous processes. The lower dorsal region of the vertebral column was evidently the seat of serious injury. As far down as the tenth dorsal spinous process the posterior aspect of the column presented its normal appearance; below that, however, instead of the natural slight concavity, there was a convexity for the space of a hand's breadth. For this extent, owing to superficial swelling, no spinous process could be felt, and the parts were soft and yielding to the finger. Pressure at the upper part of the swelling was painful. No crepitation was felt, but it was judged inexpedient to make further investigations, the result of which might have served still further to increase the injury. The slight abrasion of the cuticle before alluded to was over the centre of the swelling occupying the lower dorsal and upper lumbar regions. On being placed in bed, he retained his body in a rather bent position, and evinced great disinclination to straighten it. A catheter was passed into the bladder, and four ounces of urine drawn off, unmixed with blood. Ordered, sesquicarbonate of ammonia, ten grains; chloric ether, twenty minims; cinnamon water, one ounce; to be taken every two hours: bottles of hot water to be applied to the feet, and a little wine to be administered.—Seven P.M. same day: Countenance very anxious; breathing slightly hurried; complains of very great pain in the back and over the abdomen; recti abdominis muscles hard and knotted; reaction has been completely established, and the skin is warm; pulse

76; answers all questions; no motor power in lower extremities; there is a feeling of numbness in both; sensibility as before.—Ten P.M.: He is lying on the left side, which position is, he says, easier; answers in a feeble tone of voice; priapism still present. A water bed having been prepared, he was now carefully placed upon it, and the nature of the injury to the back, so far as described above, ascertained. The catheter was passed a second time. Ordered, thirty minims of tincture of opium to be taken immediately; poppy fomentation to the abdomen.

Oct. 31st.—Has slept a little. Pain in abdomen continues; but is less in the back. Countenance flushed; skin covered with copious perspiration; lips and mouth very dry; tongue very brown near the tip; complains of thirst; breathing natural; pulse 100, full; no motor power in the lower extremities. Sensibility, as at first report, very obtuse in the left leg, but less so in the right. The skin of the lower part of the abdomen is less sensible than naturally. Complains of pain in the right knee, and of numbness in the right thigh. Priapism continues. Catheter directed to be used three times a day. Ordered, acetate of ammonia mixture, one ounce, every four hours. To take lemonade.

Nov. 1st.—Complains of pain in the abdomen still; tongue much cleaner; pulse 80; skin cool. The bowels have not acted since admission. He says, "the legs were on the tremble last night." Motility as before. *Sensibility*: that of the left foot and leg, very obtuse; of the right, much less so. The two thighs seem pretty equal in this respect. In both the sensibility is very undecided, and, in some places, quite extinct.

2nd.—As at last report. Ordered, calomel and opium, in small doses, three times a day.

3rd.—General condition a little improved. He passes as much as three pints of urine per diem by means of the catheter. The pain is now chiefly in the back. The bowels not yet open. Motility and sensibility not altered. No priapism. To have an enema.

5th.—The bowels acted yesterday after the enema had been repeated. To-day he feels a little better. Tongue clean.

6th.—Calomel and opium omitted. To have twenty minims of tincture of opium every night at bed-time. A little wine daily.

7th.—Bowels opened last night; but he had no control over the motion. The catheter is now passed four times daily. There is pain on pressure at the seat of injury, and the muscles on each side of the vertebral column are rigid, and feel like hard cords under the finger.

10th.—Ordered, calomel, two grains; opium powder, one grain; every night.

13th.—Complains of pain in the back, and in the legs. There are frequent involuntary movements of the lower extremities; but no voluntary motion of any kind.

15th.—Diarrhoea has now set in. Ordered, compound chalk and opium powder, half a drachm after each liquid stool.

17th.—Diarrhoea continues. He complains of pain at the epigastrium, and below it. To have a blister over the painful part.

18th.—Pain relieved; sleep bad; the reflex movements of the lower extremities continue as before, and there is occasional pain in the back. The bladder is now washed out with water every day. The skin over the sacrum having become red and inflamed from constant pressure, a solution of gutta percha was brushed over it. Ordered, extract of nux vomica, a quarter of a grain; sulphate of zinc, one grain: to be made into pills, to be taken three times a day.

20th.—The spines of the tenth and twelfth dorsal vertebrae have become very red, and tender on pressure. To obviate this, cushions were directed to be applied at each side. The bowels are still relaxed. The urine contains abundance of phosphates and some pus, together with a tenacious, stringy mucus. He takes arrowroot, sherry, meat, and milk daily.

22nd.—The pain below the epigastrium has returned. There is a tightness across the chest, and some dyspnoea.

23rd.—The involuntary movements of the lower extremities are very troublesome to the patient. They are brought on by the slightest movement of any other part of the body, but mostly by the use of the catheter. Omit the nux vomica pills.

25th.—He is to-day able to move the pelvis a little to the left side, and in this way to move the leg with it. The urine occasionally runs away involuntarily during sleep.

Dec. 6th.—The general health continues much the same, but the legs are greatly wasted. Reflex action readily produced by tickling the soles of the feet. There is some pain and soreness over the right leg. He is able to adduct the left thigh very slightly. There is now a sore over the sacral region.