

is, that I was not applied to in the morning, when the ginger was *sticking* in his throat, for then, if the ginger had not entered the larynx, it might have been extracted. Not long since, I was called to a boy, in imminent danger; he had a "whistle" in his throat; I could feel it with my finger, but could not, of course, grasp it. I tickled his fauces with my finger, and the whistle was ejected with force.—*London Lancet*.

## ON PHYSOMETRA.

By Thomas Barbour, M.D., Professor of Obstetrics, &c., in the Medical Department of Kemper College.

As tympanitis uteri is a rare affection, and, more especially, as the possibility of its existence has been questioned by some distinguished authorities, among whom may be mentioned Professor Meigs, of the Jefferson Medical School, who, in his edition of M. Columbat's able work on the Diseases of Females, declares that it is very doubtful whether such a condition can occur, I beg leave to communicate to the profession four unequivocal cases which have come under my observation; the 1st, that of Mrs. W., of Nashville, Tenn., in 1833; 2nd, that of Mrs. M., of Columbia, Tenn., in 1835; 3d, that of Mrs. N., of Nashville, Tenn., who consulted me in 1842; and 4th, that of Miss Y., of Giles county, Tenn., in 1842.

As all of the above cases were very similar in character, I deem it unnecessary to detail each separately, but will simply state the prominent symptoms which particularly characterized the whole, and offer a few suggestions as to the pathology and best treatment of this very singular malady.

There was very great impairment of the digestive organs, manifested by anorexia, acidity of stomach, flatulence, and vitiated or defective biliary secretion; the bowels were very irregular, the discharges being sometimes rather consistent and clay-colored, but most generally serous or mucous, and frothy and whitish; and there was the most distressing languor and debility. The phenomenon, however, which chiefly attracted my attention, and which has given name to the affection under consideration, was the generation of a vast amount of gas in the cavity of the uterus, which was frequently discharged, *involuntarily*, with a considerable report, which circumstance rendered it extremely disagreeable for the females to be in company. Whenever the body was suddenly moved, the passage of the gas, *per vaginam*, was obvious to the patients, and quite audible at some distance to others: the uterus occasionally became greatly distended with the accumulated gas, but would subside immediately after repeated discharges induced by exertion. There was no doubt, whatever, as to the source of the gas, the females themselves being convinced that it passed *per vaginam*; but, independently of the evidence afforded by sensation, the fact that it always was discharged *involuntarily*, was, to my mind, satisfactory proof of its existence in the uterine cavity.

In regard to the pathology of this curious affection, I would remark,

that it *seems* to consist in chronic irritation of the mucous membrane, and relaxation of all the tissues of the uterus, associated with, perhaps dependent on, great impairment of the chylopoietic viscera.

It is difficult to explain how, under the above circumstances, gas is formed in the cavity of the uterus ; it may be owing to the decomposition of retained secretions, or other matters, as has been suggested ; or, it may be the result of direct secretion from the mucous membrane. Reasoning from analogy, and from the absence of any evidences of the existence of retained matters in the uterus, I decidedly incline to the latter opinion.

The leading indications of treatment are, to improve the biliary and other secretions by means of mild alterants and aperients ; to allay the irritation of the alimentary canal, and restrain excessive discharges when they exist, by means of anodynes and astringents ; and to invigorate the digestive organs and general system by appropriate tonics.

If the alvine discharges are somewhat consistent but clay-colored, or of a muddy or otherwise vitiated appearance, one or two pills, according to the following formula, administered every night, or every other night, would produce an excellent effect :—R. Mass. hydrarg., aloes, rhei, āā  $\frac{1}{2}$  dr., made into 24 pills. If, however, the discharges are serous or mucous, and whitish or greenish, attended with pain, the following prescriptions will be found very useful : 1st—R. Mass. hydrarg., plumb. acet., ext. krameria, āā  $\frac{1}{2}$  dr. ; opii grs. xv., made into 24 pills, of which one may be given every fourth or fifth hour. 2d—R. Hydrarg. c. creta, dr. i. ; gum arabic, dr. ii. ; plumb. acet., dr.  $\frac{1}{2}$  ; tinct. opii acet., dr. i. to ii. ; tinct. krameria, oz. i. ; aq. menth. pip., oz. iii. ; dose, a dessert-spoonful every fourth or sixth hour.

As tonics, I prefer the muriated tincture of iron, in the proportion of 20 drops, three times a day, in the infusion of the wild cherry-tree bark ; or sulphate of quinine, in solution, as follows : sulph. quinæ, scr. i. ; elix. vit., dr. i. ; aq., oz. ii. ; dose, a teaspoonful three or four times daily.

In addition to the above means, it is advisable that the patient should take gentle exercise daily in the open air ; and once or twice a day, a tepid shower-bath. The diet should be light and *nourishing* ; and a little good port wine will promote convalescence.

Under the above plan of treatment, all the cases I have referred to recovered entirely.—*Missouri Medical Journal.*

## FATAL CASE OF PUERPERAL FEVER—AUTOPSY, &c.

By C. S. Magoun, M.D., of Wilkinson Co., Miss.

THE subject of this case was a negress, aged 18 years, of a robust habit and sanguineous temperament. She was purchased in New Orleans December 22d, 1844, and came to this place on the night of the 23d. She was immediately taken in labor, which was not tedious, difficult, or attended with any unpleasant symptoms. She had apparently completed the full period of gestation, and soon gave birth to a child of full size, healthy and vigorous. On the morning of the 25th, Wednesday, a dose