

ART. XXXI.—*Vesico-Vaginal Fistula from Parturition and other Causes; with Cases of Recto-Vaginal Fistula.* By THOMAS ADDIS EMMET, M. D., Surgeon-in-Chief of the New York State Woman's Hospital, etc. etc. 8vo. pp. 250. New York: Wm. Wood & Co., 1868.

THIS handsomely-printed volume is dedicated to the author's instructor, Dr. J. Marion Sims, "and to the Lady Managers of the New York State Woman's Hospital." This fact is, of itself, noteworthy, as showing the march of intellect and freedom from *prejudice* in the present age. Some years since, we think it not unlikely, there might have been found ladies who, influenced by old-fashioned but now obsolete notions of prudery, might possibly not have felt complimented by being associated in the public mind with two such unpleasant diseases as vesico-vaginal and recto-vaginal fistula. "*Mais nous avons changé tout cela;*" and if the heart was already beginning to beat on the right side in Molière's time, we need not be surprised at any revolutions, moral or otherwise, which may occur in our physical and social economy during this boasted nineteenth century.

The introduction and first three chapters of Dr. Emmet's book appeared, almost in their present form, in the number of this Journal for October, 1867, (pp. 313-321). They are now republished with the addition of seventy-five illustrative cases and thirty-five wood-cuts, and make quite a handsome volume. The whole book is divided into eighteen chapters, distributed as to subjects in the following manner. The first three describe the ordinary causes of the lesion and the instruments employed in its cure, with general remarks upon the operative treatment. Chapters IV. to XII. inclusive treat of fistulæ involving the bladder in its various parts, and with different complications; Chapters XIII. and XIV. describe urethro-vaginal fistula, and the method of forming a new urethra by plastic surgery; Chapter XV. deals with recto-vaginal fistula, resulting from parturition; Chapter XVI. with vesico and recto-vaginal fistulæ, not resulting from parturition; Chapter XVII. describes certain congenital deformities of the pelvic organs and the operations for their cure; and Chapter XVIII. details three unclassified cases, one of death from pyæmia following an operation for vesico-vaginal fistula; one of death from uræmia after enlarging, for the relief of cystitis, the track of a pelvic abscess communicating with the bladder and vagina; and a third case in which the peritoneal cavity was accidentally opened, during an operation for vesico-vaginal fistula, without any bad consequences resulting.

Dr. Emmet's cases, several of which have been already published, are well told and deserve careful study from those who are interested in the important branch of surgery which they illustrate. One point on which we must differ from our author is as to his recommendation to treat vesical calculus in the female by vaginal section, in all cases. We believe that small stones and most foreign bodies should be removed by means of rapid urethral dilatation, which we have not found to be followed by incontinence of urine as dreaded by Dr. Emmet; larger calculi may advantageously be treated by lithotripsy, and the vaginal section should, we think, be reserved for those of the largest size.¹

We do not propose to enter into any extended examination of Dr. Emmet's labours, and indeed the fact that the most important part of his book has already been published in these pages, makes it unnecessary for us to do so. We may, however commend the volume to our readers as a valuable, and, so far as we can judge, a perfectly candid record, of the large experience of a careful observer, who has had certainly a very wide field for the study of the subjects upon which he has written.

We cannot praise the wood-cuts which are scattered through the text either for clearness of design or beauty of execution. The book is made easy for reference, by a full table of contents, and an alphabetical index. J. A., JR.

¹ Our readers will find several interesting cases bearing upon this point in the "*Annuaire de Médecine et de Chirurgie*, par MM. GARNIER et WAHR," for 1864. pp. 167-175.