

ART. XVI.—*Lectures on Natural and Difficult Parturition.* By EDWARD WILLIAM MURPHY, A. M., M. D.; Professor of Midwifery, University College, London; Obstetric Physician, University College Hospital; and formerly Assistant Physician to the Dublin Lying-in Hospital: 8vo, pp. 281. New York, S. S. & W. Wood, 1846.

THIS is a very excellent treatise on the practice of obstetrics, comprising a clear and accurate description of the pelvis; its measurements and those of the fetal head; of the mechanism of labour; of the management of natural, difficult, and laborious labours; and of obstetric operations generally; with an appendix containing a summary, in the form of aphorisms, of the principles and rules laid down in the thirteen lectures, of which the volume is composed. The several subjects treated of are illustrated as far as practicable by a series of well executed wood cuts.

The style of the author is clear and well adapted to render his descriptions and practical directions easy of comprehension by the student, while the views he inculcates in regard to the mechanism, varieties and management of labour, whether natural or difficult, are in the main sound and calculated to lead to caution and skill in the practice of the obstetric art.

His two lectures on the mechanism of natural labour, are particularly excellent, and render this important subject, without a correct knowledge of which no one can ever become a safe or skillful obstetrician, perfectly plain. A careful perusal of these lectures, by any one who has made himself familiar with the structure, form, and dimensions of the female pelvis and fetal head, cannot fail to communicate exact views of the several stages of labour, and of the relative position of the head in each, enabling the practitioner to judge accurately of the character of the labour in each case, and to detect readily any slight deviation of the head from the most favourable position, and when practicable to rectify it.

The directions laid down in these lectures on the management of natural labour, are likewise judicious. All that is necessary to be done to insure the comfort and safety of the mother, as well as the safe delivery of the child, is pointed out with sufficient minuteness, while every unnecessary interference is pointedly discountenanced.

The author's directions for the management of difficult and laborious cases are in the main equally sound. Caution and patience are strongly inculcated in every case, in which there is no positive evidence of the impossibility of delivery *per vias naturales* without manual or instrumental assistance, or in which delay does not place the life of the mother in imminent danger.

The whole of his remarks on the subject of the vectis and forceps, and the circumstances and period for their employment, are well worthy of a close study by all who are about to engage, as well as of those who have already engaged in obstetric practice; they may, perhaps, be considered by some, as calculated to lead to unnecessary timidity and delay in a resort to instruments. We apprehend, however, that the tendency to be feared is in the opposite extreme, and that the inculcation of great caution and reserve is less calculated to lead to unfortunate results, than allowing the student and young practitioner to suppose that the use of instruments is so far unattended with danger, that they may be resorted to in every case of difficulty, as well as to shorten the duration of a tedious labour. D. F. C.

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ART. XVII.—*Adulterations of various Substances used in Medicine and the Arts, with the Means of detecting them; intended as a Manual for the Physician, the Apothecary and the Artisan.* By LEWIS C. BECK, M. D., Professor of Chemistry in Rutgers' College, New Jersey, and in the Albany Medical College; Honorary Member of the Medical Society of the State of New York, &c. New York, 1846: pp. 338, 12mo.

THE object of this work, as stated by the author, is to point out the adulterations of numerous substances employed in medicine and the arts, and to indicate the