

lating effects of NAUSEA; where the uniform consent obtains between the uterus and stomach, vomiting is occasioned, and then the union of action between those organs is followed by the consent of disposition with the entire system. *By vomiting the labour is very much forwarded; every fit of vomiting, according to popular observations, doing more service than several pains, partly by the increased pressure, and partly by the succeeding relaxation.*

"Now, when nature produces these happy effects, it is well; but where that strict and intimate connexion does not exist between the stomach, nerves, and uterus, then I would certainly endeavour to imitate nature, and to produce it by art. If we alter the condition of one organ, we change the state of the other; whatever affects the stomach will, by a sympathy no way difficult to comprehend, equally extend to the womb."

Cases of relaxation induced by other means, such as incidental salivation, warm temperature, smoking, &c., are related in the work alluded to. The following example of the effects of vomiting is given in the *appendix*, page 17.

"Mrs. Blair had two children, after most severe and tedious labour; in both forceps had been employed. She suspected malformation of the pelvis, and was so much alarmed at the approach of her third labour, that she resolved to go to Glasgow, where she had a daughter. I then saw her for the first time; she consulted me on the propriety of going, which I did not discourage. On the night she sailed she became sea sick, and vomited freely repeatedly, which she had not done in her former labours; she had a few pains, but not like those to which she had been formerly subject; the nausea and sickness continued, during which her child was born to her great astonishment and delight.

"It is not a little curious, that though the valuable effects of relaxation were well known to every observer of the process of labours, pleasing to the patient, and encouraging to the attendants, yet that, as far as I can find, these important advantages are not sufficiently appreciated in the obstetric works of our authors. Where I have not had a sufficiently early opportunity of employing the mode alluded to (page 6, *appendix*), of *altering the tonicity of the simple solids, and relaxing their rigidity, whether hereditary or acquired, by the long-continued imbibition of tepid watery vapour*; or where the patient or friends have rejected the trial, or declined to persevere in the use of *judicious fomentations diffused from antispasmodic and emollient decoctions*; then I have

occasional recourse to such temporary means of promoting *artificial relaxation* as the circumstances and shortness of time permit me to recommend.

"In such cases I endeavour to assist nature, and to bring about the agency which, in her aberrations, she may postpone or omit. When nothing indicates the impropriety of the practice, and true labour has continued much longer than usual, then I have seen it useful to begin the use of the *vin. ipecacuanha, parvis et repetitis dosibus, primo ad nauseam, et aliquando ad vomitionem leniter ciendam*. I certainly observed that, as the pores are opened by this remedy, the patients are less liable to febrile or ephemeral complaints after their accouchments."—*Appendix*, page 18.

This *appendix* contains remarks on other and more durable means of relaxation, such as altered temperature, fomentations, &c.; but the above extracts on the point under consideration are sufficient to show the theory and practice, so far as *emetics* are concerned. C. C.

MR. LISTON'S LATE OPERATION OF TRACHEOTOMY.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR,—Since I communicated to you the particulars of the case in which a foreign body was removed from the bronchus (see LANCET, page 419), Mr. Liston has been favoured by a letter from Dr. Adams (the learned translator of "Paulus Ægineta"), under whose charge the patient was for several months. After detailing the history of the case as already related, he states that, as the symptoms were at that time (when she came under his charge) by no means urgent, and as she represented the bone to be a small object, I thought it possible that it might be brought up by coughing (of which I knew a singular case about six years ago), or that the unpleasant effects produced by its presence in the respiratory passages might gradually subside. I therefore resolved to try the effect of allaying irritation on general principles, but from the first I looked upon it as a possible contingency that the operation of bronchotomy might be necessary. Hence I find that I have erred in my statement of the opinion of the surgeons in the country as to the nature of the case, and must beg that you will insert this note to counteract an error into which I was led by the patient in drawing up the history of the case. I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

JAMES DUNCAN.

Edinburgh, July 3rd, 1834.