

## MIDWIFERY AND GYNÆCOLOGY.

*Corrosive Sublimate in Obstetrics.*

Two cases of mortal poisoning by uterine injections of Von Swieten's fluid are actually known to have occurred. They are reported by Drs. STADTFELDT and STENGER. They are perhaps debatable, but should lead the accoucheur to use corrosive sublimate only with certain precautions, and with a knowledge of the reason therefor. This reserve made, corrosive sublimate nevertheless remains the best antiseptic in obstetrics. The statistics furnished by the different maternities of Paris, and particularly by those in the service of Prof. Tarnier, where the agent has been employed for the first time, are sufficient evidence on this point. Hofmeier reports the cases above referred to in the *American Journal of Obstetrics* for September, 1884. The first case was that of a primipara, æt. 25, who had been long in labor, and showed some symptoms of fever during the delivery. The soft parts were very unyielding, requiring some slight incisions, and the patient was delivered with forceps. There being some atony, hot injections of corrosive sublimate, 1 : 1000, were given. During the first days of the puerperium the patient presented some very peculiar symptoms: general depression, then a comatose state, together with a certain hyperæsthesia of the whole body, subnormal temperature, and offensive diarrhœa. About the fourth or fifth day these symptoms abated. The patient had some puerperal abscesses, for which she continued under treatment for some time at her house. Albumen was present in her urine a considerable time from the first day on.

The second case was that of an eclamptic primipara, æt. 25; the eclampsia on the whole ran a benign course; the patient was delivered by the forceps without material difficulty. After delivery there was some degree of uterine atony, for which a hot irrigation with about six pints of a 1 : 1000 corrosive sublimate solution was given. The hemorrhage ceased, and the patient soon recovered consciousness. On the days succeeding delivery there appeared great hyperæsthesia, subnormal temperature, and profuse fetid diarrhœa. The patient became somewhat somnolent, and death ensued on the fourth day. The autopsy again showed the most extraordinary alterations in the intestinal mucosa, which was enormously swollen and partly gangrenous as far as the transition into the ileum, but especially so in the rectum. The kidneys showed marked deposits, although calcareous deposits, as in Stadtfeldt's case, could not be found. From these cases Hofmeier concludes that the condition of the kidneys has much to do with the poisonous effect of the sublimate. The conclusions seem entirely justifiable when it is remembered that these organs play a very important part in the excretion of many toxic drugs. For example: opium and its derivatives are contraindicated, or should be administered with great caution, in cases of nephritis. In 1873 Bouchard published two cases of mercurial poisoning terminating in death in two patients: one a case of interstitial, the other of parenchymatous nephritis. Only small doses of the drug were taken. It therefore seems established that slight renal disease entails great caution in the use of corrosive sublimate, and that in extended degeneration of the organs its use is altogether contraindicated.—*L'Union Médicale*, Jan. 6, 1885.

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*A Successful Case of Laparo-Elytrotomy.*

In the *Annals of Surgery* for Jan. 1885, Dr. ALEX. J. C. SKENE reports a case of laparo-elytrotomy which is the ninth on record, and the fourth on which Dr. Skene has operated; three of his four operations having been successful. The patient was twenty-one years of age, and when a child was the subject of