

the rational surgeon as opposed to Listerism. For at that meeting Mr. Savory in language at once forcible and clear, exposed the absurdities and evils of what he designated the Listerian plan of treatment. And if any one is in doubt regarding the falsity of Listerism as a doctrine, let him read Mr. Savory's address on the Prevention of Blood Poisoning in the Practice of Surgery.

## THE TREATMENT OF POST PARTUM HEMORRHAGE BY TOPICAL APPLICATIONS.\*

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The treatment of post partum hemorrhage is a subject that always secures attention in any assembly of medical practitioners, and rarely fails to call forth discussion that elicits valuable suggestions. This fact is my warrant for offering this short paper.

I shall present the opinions of a few leading authorities and relate two cases recently treated by myself by topical applications. The chief effects sought are, to excite uterine contractions, or produce a hemostatic effect in the mouths of the bleeding uterine vessels, or a combination of both these effects. The principal means of effecting these are:—1. Introduction of the hand into the uterine cavity. 2. Introduction of cold in the various forms. 3. The application of electricity. 4. Injections of irritant fluids as whiskey, vinegar, &c. 5. Particularly the injection of tincture of iodine. 6. Solution of the styptic salts of iron. 7. Hot water. The use of the hand in the uterine cavity and the internal application of cold, are old, and well tried remedies, that enable the accoucheur to control the majority of cases after all extra-uterine means may have failed, or have proved themselves too slow to meet the emergency in time. These valuable and ready methods are beyond discussion. Electricity is rarely available and not to be depended upon. The injection of whiskey, vinegar, tincture of iodine are of some value. Yet it is the two last mentioned agents that I desire to examine, namely, the solution of the styptic salts of iron, and hot water.

That able obstetrician, Dr. Robert Barnes, was, I believe, the first to use the iron salts, and thereby made a most valuable addition to the obstetric art. Yet its use has engaged the most earnest attention of the profession to the present day. It has not yet been decided that it is safe enough to be gen-

erally useful. Certain it is, that it does not fill all our requirements, and we are still in search of something that shall be at once powerful and safe. Cases are reported from time to time, detailing the success of the iron injections in meeting this appalling condition when everything else has failed. Other observers equally able, state that ill effects frequently follow the practice, and therefore decline to use it. None deny its great power and ability to control almost any case of post partum hemorrhage. In this respect it ranks second to no other agent. Dr. Barnes recommends the liquor ferri perchloridi P. B., one half pint to three and a half pints of water, or 1 in 8. He directs to first thoroughly clear the uterus of clots. Be sure the syringe is entirely free from air, then carry the nozzle of the syringe to the fundus of the uterus and slowly inject the fluid. He says he has used it for years and that it is perfectly safe—the only accident likely to occur being the introduction of air into the uterine sinuses.

Dr. Barnes classifies the subjects of this treatment as follows:—Those who fully recover; those followed by phlegmasia dolens; and those who die but were moribund before its use.

At a meeting of the London Obstetrical Society in 1873, this treatment was under discussion. Drs. Cleaveland, Wynn, Williams, Braxton Hicks and Tyler Smith endorsed the iron injections with only slight qualification. Dr. Playfair thinks the chief danger may arise from the retention of hardened coagula. In his recent work on obstetrics, he says—"Supposing all other means to have failed, and the uterus obstinately refuses to contract in spite of all our efforts, and do what we will cases of this kind must occur, the only other agent at our command is the application of a powerful styptic to the bleeding surface. The experience of all who have used the injection of the solution of the perchloride of iron in such cases proves that it is thoroughly effectual, and its introduction into practice one of the greatest improvements of modern midwifery."

Dr. Steele of the Liverpool Lying-in Hospital, reports a number of cases treated in this manner, terminating favorably. In the hospitals of Vienna it has been used extensively with good results. On the other hand Dr. Heywood Smith reports a case where death followed its use, and he believes the death was due to the injection. Dr. Snow Beck

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