

the repair of which is painful, unnerving and generally of doubtful expediency. I have become very skeptical of the influence of such lesions upon the general health, and have come to the belief that, even in bad cases, it is greatly overrated. In my experience, the mistake usually made in these cases is that of attributing to the lacerations the mock uterine symptoms of nerve prostration. About this there can be no error, for I have over and over again, without any surgical treatment whatever, cured of all their ailments, patients who had been sent to me for the very purpose of undergoing some operation on the womb, on the perinæum, or even on the ovaries themselves.

Just as headache does not necessarily mean brain disease, so ovary ache, groin-ache and backache do not necessarily mean ovarian disease. Nerve strain and these aches are, it is true, correlatives, but the middle term which connects them is merely a disturbance in the circulation. Yet time and again—and I say this deliberately—have ladies been sent to me to have their ovaries taken out, when the whole mischief had started from some mental worry. Their ovaries were sound, but their nerves were not, and no operation was needed for their recovery. The physician of the present day is too apt to jump from any distinctly female ache to an ovarian conclusion without the delay of any misgivings. The ache is in the back, then, he argues, it probably is ovarian; it is in the groin, then, of course, it is ovarian; it is in the head, but extremes meet, and surely it comes from the ovaries. I, indeed, have seen a painful nose, and also a red one, attributed to the ovaries and treated canonically by the hot vaginal douche and uterine applications. From this widespread bias and pernicious haste the removal of the ovaries has degenerated into a busy industry by which, in city and in country, very many women have been and are

being mutilated, both needlessly and on the slightest provocation.

So misleading, indeed, are the symptoms of a jaded brain or of other nerve strain, under the uterine guise in which they often masquerade, that when a jilted girl, a bereaved mother, or a grieving wife consults a physician, he, unless on his guard, will be more likely to minister to a womb diseased than to a mind diseased. Such cases, even when associated with actual uterine disease, are not bettered by a merely local treatment. Nor are medicines by themselves of much avail. What they need are the incantations of the rest cure: viz., massage, electricity, and strict seclusion. Hope should be infused into every case, and, above all, there should be imported into it the personality of the physician. The riper my experience, the more am I convinced that, in the treatment of woman's diseases, the possibility of a nerve origin or of a nerve complication should be the *fore*-thought and not the *hind*-thought of the physician.

DR. SUNDBERG IN BAGDAD.*

*U. S. Consular Mansion,
BAGDAD, TURKEY IN ASIA,
June 7th, 1893.*

*President and Fellow-Members of the
San Francisco County Medical Society:*



During my seven years' membership of this society I have abstained from inflicting on you the painful ordeal of having to listen to learned papers; nor need you tremble now, for I shall only serve you a dish of hodge-podge of questionable ingredients, and badly cooked. Indeed, I should have maintained golden silence—it would perhaps

*Read before the San Francisco County Medical Society, Aug. 8th, 1893, by Dr. D. W. Montgomery, and published in the *Pacific Record*.