

feels faint; calls for fresh air, and asks in a low whisper to be fanned; the pulse weak and fluttering. I immediately ordered warmth to the extremities, and cloths wrung out in cold brandy and water to the vulva, and administered powders of opium and acetate of lead, not having the ergot at hand. The discharge was checked in a measure on the morning of the 16th, but she complains of sickness at the stomach, tongue coated with a dark fur, and breath offensive; some slight oozing of blood staining the cloths applied to the vulva, heat and throbbing at the uterine region. The cold applications are grateful, but the powders she thinks disagree with her. When I saw her on the evening of the 16th the discharge had returned as profusely as before, and she was extremely prostrated and faint. Being now provided with a good specimen of the ergot* I immediately commenced its administration in doses of five grains every three hours. Before she had taken the second dose the peculiar nausea caused by the medicine was complained of, and a short time after the second dose she vomited, complained of pains at the uterine region which were followed by the expulsion of large coagula. On the 17th, except slight staining of the cloths there was no discharge, and though greatly prostrated, feels better. No more coagula were discharged, the oozing of blood soon ceased, and was replaced by an offensive leucorrhœal discharge which continued for about a week. She gained strength rapidly under the treatment pointed out above for the interval, and for a week before the next period she appeared, except the weakness incident to the loss of so much blood, to be in the enjoyment of her usual health. The next period occurred at the usual time, and continued natural for several days, when it became dark and extremely foetid, and small clots were observed. I resorted to the Ergot on the third day and soon succeeded in arresting the discharge, which was not followed as before with leucorrhœal, at the end of a week from the accession of the discharge she appeared, except slight weakness and susceptibility to fatigue, to be in the enjoyment of her usual health.

* Much of the uncertainty which has been said to attend the operation of this drug, depends doubtless on the quality of the specimen employed, though there are constitutions undoubtedly which are not susceptible to its action. The same may be said of most other remedies whose action on the system is undoubted. Many circumstances affecting the growth of the substance have a great influence on its medicinal activity.—According to Burritt, the active principal of the Ergot resides in the external covering or diffuent peridium, and the occurrence of heavy rains, when this is soft, washes it away, and leaves the hard nucleus which is wholly inert; therefore, in procuring a specimen, care should be taken to select such as has been matured during a dry autumn, and it should be harvested before the parent crop. These precautions being taken, if kept without pulverizing in a bottle closely corked and covered, to prevent the transmission of light air and moisture, it will retain its activity for years; the best evidence of which is its peculiar odour when pulverized, which I can compare to nothing so well as to that emitted by the secundines following the birth of a healthy child, (a somewhat curious coincidence, seeing this is the only substance known which seems to act specifically on the uterus), of which any one can satisfy himself by directing his attention to it.