

The Coming Duties of the Accoucheur.

—Prof. Gaillard Thomas, lecturing on a case of neglected prolapsus uteri, makes (*New York Medical Record*, Dec. 22) the following observation :—"The time is not distant when confinement cases will be treated very differently from what they are at the present day. This is a subject of the utmost importance. There is the most urgent need of a radical change in the practice of the majority of the profession, and the time is ripe for the appearance of a stirring and able paper on the 'Proper Management of Natural Labour,' which will awaken medical men to a sense of their duty in obstetrical cases. The physician should be expected and required to visit his patient from time to time all through her pregnancy, in order to see that everything is progressing favourably for a successful delivery, and to remove, if possible, any condition (as albuminuria, for instance) which is likely to interfere with this; and I am fully convinced that it will not be long before the accoucheur who does not pursue this plan will be held culpable. Again, he will be held equally culpable if he discharge his patient at the ninth day, or at the end of a fortnight, without making a physical examination, to ascertain that the parts have sustained no injury from the strain and pressure of parturition, and that the process of restoration to the normal condition is going on satisfactorily. A little attention paid at that time will often prevent the most serious consequences in the future. If the physician had made such an examination in the case, and had found the cervix lacerated, he might have waited a month, and then, ascertaining that trouble was resulting from it, he should have sewn it up, and also restored the perineal body which had given away. * * *

All this could have been readily done in the second month after delivery, and it would certainly have been a great deal better to do it than to wait thirteen years before undertaking the operation. It is true that this woman has suffered comparatively little pain and inconvenience in consequence of the neglect of her physician, but this is a very rare exception to the general rule; and, as I said before, the time is not far distant when the medical man will be held responsible for allowing such