

to teach how this can be, save by the constant practice of the pupil. The parovarian cyst may be diagnosed entirely from one condition, that is, hydramnios, partly by its thin walls and partly by the fact to which he has alluded, that hydramnios is very easily detected. Ascitic fluid is revealed in the same way, and by the additional fact that here and there we get tympanitic percussion notes.

The large uterine myoma is defined by its firm sense of resistance and its uniform feel and pseudo-fluctuation, also by the fact that it has a smaller diameter at the base than at the middle or upper part. Pregnancy, the rock ahead to inexperienced practitioners, can be infallibly revealed by palpation. First of all, there is fluctuation due to the liquor amnii, and it can be easily detected, and this declares the cystic nature of the mass. If the hand be made to lie gently on the parietes for a few minutes a rhythmical contraction of the uterus, by which at one time it is hard as a cricket ball and at another soft as a cushion, will become perfectly apparent, and this is as infinitely more certain sign than the sound of the fetal heart or placental bruit. The fetal heart is a sound which may guide and sustain the practitioner in his conclusions, but it is so easily imitated by intestinal noises, and often so difficult to find, that it is not to be depended upon with certainty. The placental souffle is probably more easily recognized than the fetal sounds, but placental sounds are very often, in rapidly growing tumors of the uterus, so completely imitated that there is always a certain amount of doubt connected with them. But the relaxation and contraction of the uterus in pregnancy are points in diagnosis which when once made apparent, can never be mistaken for anything else.

### THE USES OF DIGITALIS.

Dr. W. Symington Brown of Stoneham, Mass., (*Louisville Med. News*), gives the following regarding the use of digitalis:

Digitalis has two marked properties: it is a heart tonic and diuretic. It seems to exercise more control over the circulatory than the nervous system. Next to the preparations of opium and cinchona, I have given it to patients more frequently than any medicine, and the result of my observations for twenty-five years is that digitalis acts slowly, too much so to conclude that it directly affects the nervous system. Another conclusion I have arrived at is, that it is not a cumulative medicine, in the ordinary sense of that term. Our own Dr. Odlin holds the same opinion. On account of its slow solubility in the blood, it may appear to accumulate when too rapidly administered. An interval of six or eight hours should be allowed between doses. In some patients it produced diarrhoea.

In medicinal doses, digitalis steadies the heart's action, lessens the number of beats, allows the coronary arteries to supply nourishment to the enfeebled organ (which is only possible during the diastole), and contracts the arterioles all over the body. In poisonous doses, it seems to tetanize the heart, at last totally arresting its movements. Experiments on the lower animals and a few post-mortem examinations in man show that the left ventricle is always empty and rigidly contracted after death caused by poisonous quantities.

The following is a list of the more important diseases in which digitalis has been given advantageously:

1. In mitral obstruction, and generally whenever effusion occurs from debility. When dropsy supervenes from heart disease, when the face is dusky, the jugular veins distended, the breathing hurried, and the pulse feeble and intermittent—small doses of digitalis, aided by position and stimulants, will often work wonders. In some cases, where the left ventricle is both dilated and hypertrophied, it may be given tentatively,

2. After rheumatic fever, when the pulse is feeble, rapid and irregular, combined with salicylate of soda. It is also useful in the later stages of typhoid fever. In moderate doses it reduces the temperature in all fevers.

3. In atonic uterine hemorrhage, and as a hemostatic after surgical operations on the uterus, it may be alternated with ergot. In giving digitalis it not unfrequently occurs that the pulse is accelerated at first for a few hours, although the final effect is to reduce the number of pulsations.

4. In delirium tremens. Very large doses have been given successfully in this affection. I recollect attending a case in Scotland, many years ago, assisted by my tutor, where we gave tincture of digitalis in half-ounce doses, after a fair and futile trial of opium, and the patient recovered. He was a regular toper, full of morbid fancies, and he would only consent to swallow the medicine on condition that I scratched his back, during which interesting process he fell asleep. I remember that Dr. Glen was in doubt whether it was the digitalis or the scratching that saved him.

5. Drs. Nelligan and Corrigan, of Dublin, strongly recommended it in epilepsy. They gave two ounces of the infusion at bedtime, continued for four nights, with an interval of two nights, then repeated as before. My experience of its use in this affection is not extensive, and not very favorable.

6. In spermatorrhœa it occasionally proves beneficial. The influence of digitalis on sexual desire, in both sexes, is decidedly sedative and anaphrodisiac. It only exerts this influence, however, after the lapse of weeks.

7. In bleeding piles. A good form for this disease is the powder made into pills with tar,