

ovaries, suprarenal capsules, and uterus, organs entirely—or almost entirely—supplied by the sympathetic system of nerves, produces disturbance of the moral and emotional faculties altogether disproportionate to the gravity of the disease, while other organs receiving a very small supply from the sympathetic—as the lungs—may be fatally diseased, as in phthisis, without causing even much depression of spirits, so that the hopefulness and cheerfulness of the consumptive have become proverbial.

The well-known changes that take place in the composition of the fluids of the body during pregnancy and the puerperal state, and the constant demands made upon the emotional nature by fear, anxiety, and domestic cares during pregnancy, are sufficient predisposing causes to render easy an outburst of mania upon the supervention of an exciting cause. The fuel is ready, and only requires the match to inaugurate the conflagration. It is not unreasonable to suppose that an accident so serious as a cervical laceration in an organ almost exclusively supplied by the great sympathetic should act as the match and set the system ablaze.

The foregoing considerations would be valueless unless confirmed by clinical experience, and it is with the hope of contributing confirmatory evidence of this kind, and so adding something—however slight—to the knowledge of this subject, that the following cases are reported:—

CASE I. Mrs. Jos. F——, of good family and personal history, was delivered of her first child on the 17th of Nov., 1869, and became maniacal on the 20th of the same month. I saw her first on the 14th of Jan., 1870, and then learned that she had not been sane since her child was three days old. She showed no love for her baby, took no interest in her domestic duties, and required to be kept under some restraint. There was a multiple laceration of the cervix, which, under the plan of treatment then practised, would have required several months to cure. Circumstances prevented this prolonged treatment from being carried out, so she was sent to an asylum, where, I believe, she died about two years afterwards without having recovered sanity.

CASE II. Mrs. H——, aged 25, was free from hereditary tendency to insanity, and had had an excellent personal and family history. Her health during pregnancy was exceptionally good, and her labor was apparently easy and natural.

The child was born on the 9th of Jan., 1874, and on the 13th she showed signs of melancholia and complained that her friends had lost all affection for her. She was morose and frequently cried, but no marked change was noticeable for three months, when she became worse, expressing herself doubtful of the legitimacy of her child and becoming suicidal. Other means failing a uterine examination was made, and a laceration detected. It healed rapidly under appropriate treatment, when all mania disappeared, and her health has remained excellent. She has borne two children since.

CASE III. Mrs. Jos. R—— had her fourth child on the 28th of Oct., 1877, and was well until the 30th, when she suddenly became violently insane. Chloral was given to secure sleep, and at the end of two weeks she regained sanity, but continued in bad health and very nervous and despondent for the next two years, when I was led to examine the uterus, and discovered a stellar laceration. This was cured, and her health has been robust since. Two subsequent confinements have not caused any return of the symptoms of nervousness or insanity.

CASE IV. Mrs. Joseph B——, a primipara of good history, was delivered in November, 1877, and became maniacal within a week. I saw her first on Dec. 5th, when the disease had lasted about a month.

An anæsthetic was administered and an examination made, revealing a bilateral laceration of the cervix uteri. Copious douching of the torn parts with hot water produced almost immediate improvement in her mind, and by the time the laceration was cured the maniacal symptoms had entirely disappeared, and her health has remained good up to the present time. My friend, Dr. Murphy, also saw this case.

CASE V. Mrs. Thos. M——, of good history, was confined on the 29th of Jan., 1883, and within ten days became morose and silent, dis-