

Selected Articles.**THE PLAINT OF AN AGGRIEVED
UTERUS.***

In presuming to ask your attention to a communication from one not of your number, I feel that a few words of introduction would be proper. I am, or at least I think I am, a much wronged Uterus. For a long time I have felt that the medical profession was not acting with fairness toward me;—that, on the contrary, I am made the object of unjust suspicion and annoying espionage. I am the victim of constant fault-finding and accusation. Contrary to all rules of law and justice, I am continually called on to prove my innocence—am never allowed the benefit of a plea of "not guilty." Certain members of your profession have gained the ear of my hostess, and have inculcated a bitter prejudice in her mind against me, so that I am looked on by her, on all occasions and under all circumstances, as the one peccant organ concerning which nothing good could be credited, nothing evil disbelieved.

My innate modesty and shrinking timidity have thus far prevented me from giving voice to my complaints, and I was not without hope that meekness and patience would one day bring their promised reward. But events of late seem to shape themselves more and more adversely. Any anticipation that time would bring relief seems about extinguished, and I am almost ready to prolapse under my accumulated troubles. Oppressed by gloomy forebodings, I yet felt that existence was worth at least a little more of struggle and effort, and, while revolving in my mind what I should do, the idea suddenly occurred to me to lay my grievances before you, in the hope that I might gain a hold on your sympathies, and possibly secure a champion who would enlist his efforts in my cause.

To specify, then, more particularly the matters I complain of, shall be my first business. You are all acquainted with my hostess. You know she is rather thin in flesh, not very well nourished, with feeble and easily disordered digestion, nervous, whimsical; her social and domestic relations not always pleasant, with a good deal of unoccupied time on her hands (she doesn't keep house), a couple of children (who are taken care of by their grandmother), and much afflicted with headaches. You know, also, that she very rarely acknowledges that she feels well.

To give you an idea of how we have been getting along together, it will be necessary to go back a few years. For a considerable period after I began to perform my physiological duties, we got

along well enough. But by and by, late hours and undue indulgence in sweetmeats began to tell on my lady's digestion, and, as a consequence, the supply of the particular material necessary to the proper performance of my duties becoming deficient, both in quantity and quality, I could not perform them well, and we had a little trouble. The old family doctor, who was consulted about it, told her mother, among other things, that late hours and excitement, and dissipation were bad for her, but things went on in the same way, nevertheless; I, meanwhile, doing the best I could. One day, however, my hostess heard of some great man, who had been away off somewhere, and who could effect almost anything in the line of relieving afflicted females short of a miracle; so she began to complain more and more in the hope that she might induce her parents to send her to him. And an unlucky day it was for me when she succeeded, as she did. So away we went—the Great Man was seen—and with a wise shake of the head, he said: "Miss, it's your womb." Well, I was astonished—I wondered what I had done—I couldn't think what he meant. I wasn't very long in finding out what he proposed to do in the matter though. A short time afterward I felt something cold, and then I saw a great round opening to the light, and immediately the Great Man's eye came into view. I was so startled and confused, I didn't observe much that he did, but before he quit he had pushed a hard, smooth stem up into my cervix, and I had to wear it there ever so long.

I believe after awhile that my hostess began to think she was better. She went back home at any rate, and began the same routine of life she had followed before. My work was often interfered with by imprudences on her part similar to those which had caused our first trouble, and we didn't get on at all as we should have done. So after awhile away we went to see the Great Man again. This time he introduced me to a crooked, twisted sort of a thing. I heard him say it was a pessary, and he made me ride on that to correct my malposition as he called it. I didn't like this treatment a bit, and soon let them know it, so they very soon took the thing away, and my hostess went home again rather hastily. I wondered why she didn't stay longer, as she did the other time—and that was soon explained, too—there was to be a wedding. Well, that came off in course of time, and as I never gossip about family affairs, even if I am ill-treated, our narrative will be interrupted for a time.

Not so *very* long after this—just as I had expected too—I found I had another duty to perform. I was glad of it, too, for I hoped by doing my best (as indeed I had always done), I might regain my hostess' regard. How well I did, you can see for yourselves any fine day, if you will only peep over into his grandmother's yard—as fine a boy as any-

* Recently read before the Medical Society of the State of West Virginia, by L. D. Wilson, M.D., of Wheeling, West Va.