

course, endorsed her hopeful view of her case, and urged her not to trouble herself any further. In due course I was summoned, and on examination found a shoulder presenting. The time of day being that in which all my medical neighbors would be out, I persuaded the patient to allow me to turn without giving chloroform. The operation was performed with some difficulty. The child was an anencephalous monster. The extremities were rigidly flexed, the feet almost sole to sole, and the fingers firmly clenched. The child could only have been dead a few hours. The mother was, of course, desirous of seeing her child, but I dissuaded her from this by assuring her that although this child was imperfect, there was no reason why she should not be more fortunate next time. The patient made a good recovery and shortly afterward changed her residence. Four months later she became again pregnant, and unfortunately she frequently passed a man who was a partial cripple, living in the same road. This circumstance revived the patient's fears; but she did not appear to be much depressed and she was quite hopeful regarding her coming infant. The confinement took place at full term, and presented precisely the same difficulties as on the previous occasion. The child also was a counterpart of the last one, with the exception of the head, which was normal. After an interval of a few months my patient became again pregnant, and this time she was delivered of a strong and undeformed child."

It is impossible to cite all the cases published in the last few years. I have limited myself to the citation of some that seem to me to be more characteristic. I may add that the same facts are observed in the case of animals. Dr. Gray, curator of the British Museum, showed at a meeting of the London Zoological Society, on February 24, 1864, a chicken, whose bill and feet perfectly resembled those of a parrot. These monsters were very often born in his hen-house, and he explained them by the fright of the hen, caused by the cries of the parrot when the hen came near its cage.

My father, with whom I on one occasion spoke on the subject of maternal impressions, related to me that on his farm a peasant had a horse whose face greatly resembled that of a cow's. As I was interested in this question, I took the first opportunity to see the animal, and must acknowledge that its face presented a striking resemblance to a cow, only the horns were wanting. The peasant was known in the whole village as the owner of the horse with a cow's head. I may state that in Poland the peasants keep the horses together with the cattle in the same stable.

Can we, in view of so many facts, affirm that maternal impressions have no influence upon the fœtus? To repudiate and deny so many facts,

because they are in contradiction with the universally accepted opinion, is to affirm, in one's conceit, that all laws that govern nature are discovered and known.

It is true that no nervous connection exists between the mother and the fœtus, but does the absence of it exclude the possibility of the maternal impressions upon the fœtus?

If we only consider the following facts, we have no reason to deny the influence of maternal impressions: 1, That every idea, every impression, must be materialized, or, in other words, it is impossible without the work of nervous tissue; 2, that there exist many phenomena which cannot be explained by direct connection with the nerves, as, for instance, the action of one mind upon another at a distance; 3, that a certain impression or idea can influence the function of our tissues or organs, as, for instance, fear can produce many disorders in our organism, even the thought of a lemon can produce abundant secretion of saliva, etc. Besides that, the modern psychologists and physiologists believe that the fœtus, long before entering the world, is conscious of pain and physical satisfaction, and also gives expression to many impressions. These affirmations of psychologists are founded upon Luy's experiments, which prove that the placing of the cold hand upon the walls of the abdomen immediately produces movements of the fœtus, and it is well known that the body is not a good conductor of warmth. It is also known that the light suddenly thrown into the eye of the mother, as well as a sudden noise, produces violent convulsive movements of the fœtus, and Perez states as a fact that a certain woman, experiencing great fear three months before the birth of her child, felt convulsive movements of the fœtus, and the child lived only a few months after birth, having very often, and without any external cause, sudden convulsive fits.

These are facts, proving that the fœtus may unconsciously, but yet truly, express maternal impressions. But how the external or internal world acts upon the souls, half-formed and perhaps already possessing certain indistinct self-knowledge, is a very hard question, which cannot be quickly solved. According to Luys' the nervous cells are, during a certain time, in a state of vibration, produced by external impulses or impressions. If we agree with this writer, the question ceases to be obscure to us, or to exist in the region of imagination or fables. Besides that, it is known that deviation of the nervous fibre, during development, of even one-tenth of a millimetre will influence powerfully the structure and development of certain organs. In consequence of this, an impression, be it continuous or accidental, received during fetal life, influences the development of the brain and individual