

AN EARLY SYMPTOM OF PREGNANCY

It is in no spirit of boasting that I strongly insist upon the importance of a symptom as indicative of the beginning of pregnancy. I refer to the almost complete disappearance of the phosphates from the urine. Were we to investigate the cause of their being thus retained we should doubtless find that they are in no small degree required for the development of the fetus in the earlier part of pregnancy. They condense almost entirely into the formation of the bones, increasing the density of their surfaces by the formation of osteophytes, for a long time erroneously considered the result of an error in nutrition. In the late months, the fetus develops rapidly, these reserves are attached, the bones tend to increase their primitive weight, the osteophytes gradually diminish and finally disappear. In the earlier months of nursing, they are required to maintain in proper proportion the phosphates of the milk.

This also happens when the woman is strong and well nourished. In a contrary manner, however, and these are the cases which always occur in the cities and great industrial centres, the mother, far from laying up such reserves, appropriates from her own substance, material for the nourishment of the fœtus. She wastes away and gives life to a miserable being, which her impoverished milk is wholly unfit to nourish. If now the organism be supplied with the phosphates which it thus loses, we shall see the pregnant woman recover her strength and give life to a new being under normal conditions of health and resistance. This is no longer a theory, but it is also practical, for I have had the fortune to observe good results, nine times in ten, following the administration of the phosphate of lime.

Among other facts in proof of this, I will cite the example of a family of four children, the first two of whom, of ordinary strength, were of the lymphatic type, deficient in both mental and physical vigor, with palor and inactivity of the skin, etc., while the other two, born a long time after these, and in a time when the mother was in an enfeebled state, from the effects of a nervous disorder, were nevertheless vigorous, noisy children, with beautiful, healthy complexions. I attribute this difference of condition to the administration, during the last two pregnancies, of the phosphate of lime in the form which I consider most physiological, namely, in the form of a syrup or the wine of Dusart. The observation is rendered the more conclusive in that the results of the administration of the phosphate of lime was so happy as compared with the condition existing during the former pregnancies.

I have further observed, in many cases, a rapid disappearance of the vomiting in women to whom I have prescribed the syrup or wine of Dusart; and I have nearly always found the eruption of the teeth to occur more readily and to progress without difficulty in their children. Thus, in the family

of a *confrere*, I have seen the first tooth appear in the first two children, at the eleventh month. During the third pregnancy the mother took the phosphate of lime and the child, without any disturbance of its health, cut the first two teeth at a few days after the fourth month.

Let me repeat: I have been able to demonstrate, entirely to the recommendation of phosphate of lime, the comparison between infants that have followed pregnancies deprived of the only aid to nature, and those that have been blessed by the administration of the element which presides over the formation of muscle as well as of the osseous system.—Dr. Delattre in *Gazette des Hospitaux*.—*Cincinnati Lancet and Clinic*.

THE CANADA MEDICAL RECORD,

A Monthly Journal of Medicine and Surgery.

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SUBSCRIPTION TWO DOLLARS PER ANNUM.

All communications and Exchanges must be addressed to the Editors, Drawer 356, Post Office, Montreal.

MONTREAL, JANUARY, 1883.

VITAL STATISTICS.

In our issue for December, we gave a history of an interview which recently took place at Ottawa between the Minister of Agriculture and a delegation from various cities of the Dominion upon the subject of vital statistics. Since then an order in Council has been passed, putting into force a scheme such as was intimated would be applied to cities of about 25,000 inhabitants. The Board of Health for the City of Montreal have been written to by the Government, with a view of putting the scheme into operation here, and we believe that the same has been done to the other cities where Boards of Health are in operation. We hope that every effort will be made to second the wishes of the Government, and that ere a great while we may be able to chronicle the fact that work has actually commenced.

Those cities which may avail themselves of the order in Council, whenever they possess local Boards of Health, should at once bestir themselves, and fall into line as rapidly as possible.