

had felt satisfied as to the propriety and practicability of the procedure.

I notice that, in Dr. Zimmerman's analysis of my obstetrical record, which I have kept as accurately as it was possible to do since May, 1852, and which was published in the October number of the *Canadian Journal of Medical Sciences*, he has only given me credit for 134 cases of rotation, but upon reference to my record I find 143 cases noted, consequently I am constrained to believe that a typographical error had been committed.

Of these 143 cases of occiput posterior positions before cited 103 were right and 40 left.

Since the 28th of May, 1877 (up to which time Dr. Zimmerman's analysis extended), I have attended 255 labors, and have accurately noted the cases where rotation was accomplished, and find that there were 16 in all, 5 of which were left and 11 right posterior, thus bearing the same or nearly the same ratio of left to right as indicated in the 143 cases previously mentioned. Why the occiput right posterior should so largely predominate over the left posterior positions I am not prepared to say, and will leave it for future solution.

Various authors in obstetrics, while mentioning the rotation of the foetal head, which frequently occurs during labor spontaneously, do not attach sufficient importance to manual assistance in order to correct the many deviations which occur in natural labor.

Dr. Meigs, who is no mean authority, speaks of the dipping of the occipital extremity of the occipito-frontal diameter and the rotation of the head so as to bring the vertex towards the pubis, and Dewees, Churchill, Playfair, Barnes, Leishman and others refer to rotation as it spontaneously occurs, but are not sufficiently explicit as to the amount or the manner of assistance which may with propriety be given to facilitate labor and ameliorate the sufferings of the parturient woman.

The head of the child being placed upon the upper end of the vertebral column as upon a pivot (its longest diameters the occipito-mental and occipito-frontal), being directed from before backwards, it is capable of considerable motion, and if in transitu, through the pelvis, the frontal extremity or pole of the occipito-frontal diameter be impeded by pressing upon the forehead with the finger or other obstacle, the

occipital extremity or pole will of necessity dip down into the pelvis, causing the vertex to present itself, and if at the same time the finger be placed upon the temporal ridge of the frontal bone or in the anterior portion of temporal fossa, and carried to the right or left, the head may be placed in first or second positions as desired.

I may state, however, for the benefit of junior practitioners, that I did not succeed in every attempt to produce rotation, but where I failed, the failure was attributed either to too long delay, thus allowing the head to be pressed too far down into the pelvis and become moulded to suit the position, or to some abnormal condition of the head or pelvis. In these cases I deemed it necessary to allow nature to complete her work, or to assist her by applying the forceps.

The best time to effect rotation is either before or immediately after the liquor amni has escaped, but it may be accomplished much later, if the bones of the child's head have not become too fully ossified.

In conclusion I feel justified in stating that by thus rectifying the position of the head of the child, we can save the mother from many hours of extreme anxiety and intense suffering, and also save much time, which to physicians in active practice is often of vital importance.

## Correspondence.

### OUR LONDON LETTER.

LONDON, ENGLAND, March 10, 1880.

It is a pity that the friends of Dr. William Farr and the Council of the British Medical Association had not made themselves better acquainted with the facts of the appointment of Sir Brydges Henniker as Registrar General before memorializing the Prime Minister on his not having appointed Dr. Farr, as it is well known in the office that Dr. Farr had some time back applied to the Government for the superannuation on the ground of old age and infirmity; indeed, I believe as a fact that for some time past he has been so infirm as to be obliged to be helped in and out of his carriage. I remember this as another instance of "save me from my friends."

The squabble between the Medical and the Surgical Staff and the Governors of Guy's Hospital respecting the nursing is I believe in a