

MIDWIFERY.

WHETHER A WOMAN CAN BE IGNORANT OF HER PREGNANCY.

In the year 1852, I attended a young married woman, aged 19 and delivered her from her first child, under the following circumstances:—I was hurriedly sent for to visit her, it being supposed that she was labouring under inflammation of the bowels. On my arrival I found her free from fever and all inflammatory symptoms; but I had not been long with her before she had a violent labor pain; another and another followed. I examined her abdomen, which I found somewhat enlarged. I took her mother aside and expressed my fears that the patient would miscarry. She smiled and said she was sure her daughter was not pregnant at all. She had never had any symptom of it, had never felt any motion as of a child in the womb and no preparations had been made or were making in the way of providing clothes for the infant. I administered an opiate with the view of preventing the miscarriage, but on my return, two hours afterwards, I found labour had progressed steadily, and she was soon delivered of an exceedingly small infant apparently still-born; but by use of the hot and cold bath alternately, I had the satisfaction of handing over to its unbelieving grand-mother a living child, and I may add that that it is now a strong, healthy boy, 8 years old. This was certainly the smallest living infant I ever saw; it could not have been from its appearance more than six months and a half in utero. On cross-examining the mother of the child, she assured me she had not the most remote idea that she was pregnant, and had never felt any movement or other peculiar feeling in the abdomen. The enlargement of the belly (which was not very great) she had never paid any regard to. Having been very delicate before her marriage, her catamenia had been extremely irregular, so that no exact data could be obtained as to the duration of the uterine life of the infant. The patient moved in the middle ranks of life and was in every respect thoroughly trustworthy, and, from what I know of her, I feel assured she would conceal nothing from me. Being a married woman, she had no reason to conceal anything, but, on the contrary, felt proud of her offspring. In further confirmation of the unexpected nature of the event, I may mention that as it happened on the 1st of April, considerable difficulty was experienced with some of her friends in convincing them of its truth. This case then, I think proves that a woman can remain in ignorance of her pregnancy up to the very time of her delivery, and is, perhaps, worthy of a place in your columns.—*Letter of R. Scott Orr, M.D., Dispensary Physician to the Glasgow Royal Infirmary, in Lancet.*

INTRA-UTERINE FRACTURE OF THE CLAVICLE.

The patient was delivered naturally, after an easy labor, of a good sized male child without the attendance of a physician. A few days after, having taken upon herself the task of washing the infant, she detected a projection on the left side, between the shoulder and sternum. Upon the examination, the presence of a perfectly consolidated fracture of the clavicle was ascertained the apex of the angle of junction pointing upward. From the fact of so short a time having elapsed from the birth of the child, and the complete union at the point of fracture it was evident that the solution of continuity must have taken place some weeks prior to the completion of pregnancy. The mother had, some three or four weeks before her confinement, received a violent blow in her left side from the edge of a door.—*Dr. Wm. B. Atkinson, in Medical and Surgical Reporter from Boston Med. Jour.*