

## XI.

*Extraordinary Case of an Extra-Uterine Fœtus, voided through an Abscess in the Cavity of the Abdomen. By Mr John Major Wilson, House-Surgeon to the Westminster Hospital.*

**A** NN RYMER, aged forty years, a native of Ireland, and the mother of five children, in the early part of the year 1795, when about three months gone with the sixth child, received much ill usage from her husband, who kicked her repeatedly upon the belly. About the same time she remembers to have caught a severe cold, by getting wet under foot. She complained of great pain all the ensuing night, and in the morning perceived that her linen was much stained with blood, which continued to drop from her in small quantities during the whole of that day. On the following night she was suddenly attacked with severe griping pains, accompanied by

by a violent discharge of blood from the vagina, partly in a fluid state, and partly coagulated, which continued with little or no intermission, for the space of five or six days. She then found herself so considerably better, as to leave her bed, and, except a certain degree of debility, occasioned by the hæmorrhage, was to all appearance tolerably well. This occurrence was altogether considered by herself and friends as a miscarriage.

About a week after her recovery she again caught cold, when, in the course of one night, the abdomen swelled to an enormous size, attended with intense pain and difficulty of breathing. She was bled, and, by the advice of some of her acquaintance, a mustard-feed poultice was applied to the belly, which however was soon removed, as it excoriated the parts, and of course occasioned very great uneasiness. About this time her legs became much swelled, she complained of intolerable nausea, and could not get any sleep. The pain continued unabated till the end of two months, when she became somewhat easier, and

and contrived, though with great difficulty, to follow her daily occupation. During this time, little or no alteration had taken place in the appearance of the abdomen.

Nothing worthy of notice occurred till the winter of 1796, when according to the woman's own description, she felt the sensation of a heavy weight falling from her navel, which in the course of two days, had reached the bottom of her belly. At this time she was unable to pass more than a few drops of urine, and was under the necessity of supporting the tumour, with her hand, introduced through her pocket hole; by degrees this sensation totally subsided, and with it the suppression of urine.

During all this time she had no catamenia, but in May 1796 a profuse hæmorrhage took place from the vagina, which continued with unremitting violence for a whole month; it then stopped altogether, and she has not since had any return. The patient was greatly relieved by this discharge, and, to use her own expression, felt much lighter; her body was regular, and her appetite returned; but the abdomen was  
still

still swelled, and very tense. Her case was now considered by her friends as dropical.

In this state she remained, sometimes better, at others worse, till the month of February 1797, when she perceived a small inflamed spot, about two inches and a half below the navel, very sore and painful; which, as it increased in size, totally deprived her of sleep, and was rapidly affecting her general health.

On March 3d, she applied to Mr Lynn, senior surgeon to the Westminster Hospital, who assured her that her complaint was not dropical, and immediately admitted her into the house. On the day following, by his order, a poultice was applied to the part affected; and on the 5th the tumour, which had been very obviously pointing for some days past, burst, and discharged pure pus, to the quantity of one pint and a half. On the ensuing night the patient voided at least eight ounces more by the rectum, and as much through the vagina. The wound was dressed with dry lint, and covered with a simple digestive ointment; in a few days

days the angles of the orifices granulated and adhered, leaving only an opening, of the size of a large garden-pea, in the centre ; which continuing to discharge copiously, night and day, the woman became much emaciated, and her strength greatly impaired. The bark and other tonics were now freely exhibited, but every effort to close the opening in the abdomen, proved ineffectual, as the discharge still continued to an immoderate degree. She complained of sickness, and an inclination to vomit, and had a tendency to costiveness.

On the 28th of May, upon removing the dressings, I discovered two hard bodies enveloped in a slimy substance ; upon examination, they proved to be the metacarpal bones of a foetus, at about four months, totally divested of their cartilages, and the soft substance was evidently no other than the flesh in a state of dissolution. On the succeeding day the ulna and radius of the right side, presented nearly half-way through the wound, and as they occasioned much pain and distress to the patient, and had manifestly but a loose attachment to the

parts about them, I very easily disengaged them with a pair of forceps. Shortly after this, more bones of the hand were voided, and from time to time portions of the soft parts.

On the 17th of June, the whole of the scalp, together with bones of the hand and wrist, not yet separated from the soft parts, were discharged at the opening, occasioning little or no alteration in its size.

On the 18th, the end of a large bone appeared at the orifice, which, on the 22d, being much looser, was disengaged by gentle motion with the fingers, and drawn out. It proved to be the os femoris. From that time the discharge of pus abated considerably, and no more bone was voided till the 22d of August, when the fibula of the same side came away.

The patient is of course now clearly convinced, that the flux of blood immediately succeeding to the violence she had received from her husband, was not a miscarriage. She is still supported by nutrient diet, her pulse, which at first was small and feeble is now nearly natural, and her appetite

tite good ; in short she has so far recovered her health, as to be able to walk the ward with little or no inconvenience.

So much time having elapsed between the discharge of the two last bones, being exactly sixty-one days, it is very probable that the issue of the case will be extremely tedious, and as it is not likely to be more elucidated during the life of the patient, I have thought proper to submit it to the public in its present state ; but should any thing of consequence occur at a future period, or an opportunity offer of examining into the state of the parts, concerned in so wonderful an operation of nature, I shall think it a duty incumbent on me, to publish the result of my inquiries.

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