utility in rheumatic diseases, and many of these cases of local paralysis are probably due to an inflammation, (either gouty, rheumatic, or syphilitic,) of the fibrous sheath of the nerves. We see the great advantage of this remedy in promoting absorption of solid effused matter in cases of iritis, and why should it not have the same power upon organs and similar tissues that are out of sight? I am convinced that it has frequently cured cases under my care when other modes proved to be inefficient, and of this I have brought forward one or two examples this evening, but, as I before stated, these cases were not intended to illustrate any special mode of treatment, or any peculiar success in treatment, but I have brought them before the Society for the same reason as that for which I collected them, viz., to illustrate some of these interesting points in the physiology of the nerves.

ON THE
RIGHT MANAGEMENT OF WOMEN,
AT FIRST MENSTRUATION,
AND DURING THE PERSISTENCE OF THAT FUNCTION.

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It has been shown, in a preceding paper, by what means the female organism may be best disposed to favour the first establishment of that important function which marks the advent of womanhood, and it might appear that when once this function has begun, the same careful vigilance of a mother, and of a medical adviser, is no longer required, nature being safely to be trusted with the rest. If this be true to a great extent with respect to those women whose constitutions are hardened by privations and the constant habit of exercise in the open air, it cannot apply to the management of those who are brought up in the midst of comforts or affluence, and in whom the emotional susceptibilities are often developed in direct proportion to the weakened energies of the body. It must also be remembered, that there are great differences in the mode of its first appearance, for if we attend to what happens to those in whom this function has been most healthily performed, we find that, at first, the flow of little amount, acquires by degrees a quantity, quality, and a length of duration, which becomes the critical measure of health in each individual case. It is, therefore, not unreasonable to suppose that this would always occur if nature had fair play, but while the performance of the function is impending, many exciting causes may intervene to determine an appearance before its appointed time, and that in an unusual manner. Sometimes I have known it to occur from a fall, or after an extraordinarily long walk. Thus a girl, 12 years of age, fell into a saw pit, and was surprised, on rising, to find herself bathed in blood; she washed in cold water, checked the flow, and was laid up with violent pains in the head and limbs for thirteen weeks, and

did not recover her health until menstruation returned regularly, a year after its accidental appearance. Sometimes a fright, or a violent emotion, brings it on suddenly, and, as far as my experience goes, in all such cases the function is inaugurated by an amount of discharge which deserves the name of initiatory flooding. In 30 per cent., I have found this function begin by a very considerable flow; in 8 per cent. it amounted to a flooding, and lasted from eight to ten days. These facts are interesting because they are not in accordance with the general belief, and because they are suggestive of useful advice necessary for a mother, who ought to be warned of the possibility of this accident, in order that by her own frightened demeanour, and that of inexperienced attendants, the girl may not be alarmed at the occurrence. Duly forewarned, a mother will not only maintain her own composure and impart it to those around her, but she will be able to assure her daughter that nothing but what is usual has happened, and she should be informed that while waiting for professional advice, she is to keep her daughter in the horizontal position, with scanty covering, in a cool, well-ventilated apartment. Such means, with the addition, in some cases, of acidulated drinks, will effectually check any excessive discharge; but should the flooding assume an alarming extent, nauseating doses of antimony should be given, and it may be even necessary to have recourse to the local application of ice.

Case.—A young lady, aged 16, of middle stature, slender make, with brown hair and grey eyes, had been brought up in town, and the accomplishments of her education had been much more attended to than the measures which might invigorate a delicate constitution. At times she had suffered very much from headache, with giddiness and vertigo, and after having taken a much longer walk than usual she became unwell. The flow was abundant from the first, and it was allowed to continue until repeated fainting fits so alarmed the family, that on the fourth day the medical attendant was sent for. He judiciously adopted the measures previously recommended, and gave two grains of acetate of lead every two hours; that having no effect, he administered ten grains of the powdered ergot of rye every hour. Three doses had produced no favourable result, when I was sent for, the patient was cold and fainting, the pulse tremulous, and the heart's action feeble. In such a state there was no time to be wasted, so after reviving her with hartshorn, I made her swallow a table spoonful of brandy, and applied to the lower part of the abdomen a bladder half full of powdered ice, ordering large mustard poultices to be kept constantly applied to some part of the limbs; the flooding gradually stopped. The patient menstruated regularly during the following months, but she was long before recovering her usual strength, and is even now subject to profuse menstruation, which, if not attended to, will eventually undermine her constitution.

In a similar case, should ice fail, it would be necessary to have recourse to surgical measures to stop the flow, but such measures should not be resorted to until the patient's fully-acquired conviction of impending danger

is sufficient to absorb the shame and vexation they would otherwise determine.

I have already stated that, from the intervention of certain exciting causes, the first appearance of this function might accidentally appear before it is due; and that, therefore, many months may elapse between the first appearance and the regular establishment of the function. Now, if this were to be carefully instilled into the mother's mind there would be less mischief done by the injudicious administration of forcing medicines to promote the return of what, in fact, ought not to have appeared so soon. The extent to which this pernicious practice is carried would hardly be credited; and as it is founded on a mistaken appreciation of what is true, the active co-operation of the profession will ever be required to eradicate so mischievous a prejudice. Neither are mothers sufficiently aware that they have no right to try experiments on their daughters, in case the accustomed tribute should not be paid with due regularity. This may depend on a cold or on some more serious disease, which would only be increased by the means usually employed to promote a return, only to be safely effected by the adoption of such treatment as may check the disease itself; and this is one of the most complicated problems of medical art.

Case.—I was lately consulted by a lady justly alarmed about her daughter's health. She was a delicate pale-faced girl, with light hair and blue eyes, and very tall and slender. She had menstruated at fourteen, without any previous disturbance; and the function had proceeded regularly for two years, but was sometimes scanty, at others profuse, and always attended by much pain. After amenorrhœa had continued several months the mother, without consulting any professional man, repeatedly gave purgatives, which increased the general debility, but did not bring on any return. She then followed up this system by administering powdered saffron in pennyroyal tea, which she had frequently given with effect to some of the poor women in the vicinity of her country house. This brought on spitting of blood to so alarming an extent that the mother then called in a medical man, who adopted measures which checked this occurrence; and very properly told her he would not answer for the patient's life if she continued to manage her daughter in so inconsiderate a manner. The girl's health improved, but had always remained delicate, and at times she had been much troubled with cough. The courses had not returned, and for that reason I was consulted. The girl is eighteen, consumptive, and little hope can be entertained of her recovery. There is no consumption in the family; and I believe this disease would not have been developed (certainly not at so early a period of life) if it had not been for the perverse love of giving medicine, which the soon-to-be-childless mother now so bitterly repents.

When there is an interruption in the return, provided there be no fever, the parent may safely permit her daughter to take additional exercise, particularly horse exercise, and should enjoin a relaxation in study. If there be signs of plethora, or of too much blood, the

mother may safely give cooling drinks, and less nutritious diet, but should this state persist, it might be necessary to prevent mischief by the timely withdrawal of a small quantity of blood.

In the great majority of cases, however, the interruption of menstruation evidently depends on constitutional weakness, and then the parent may be permitted, of her own accord, to give a more generous diet—meat twice a day, with an additional glass of bitter ale or good port wine; but on no account should she commence physicing without previous medical advice. But emmenagogues and purgatives are not only given without medical advice to promote a return, but also to augment the quantity which a mother, or those who perform the duties of a mother, deem insufficient. Now, again, this would not occur if mothers were given to understand that the smallest quantity regularly discharged is perfectly sufficient to fulfil all the views of nature; and that a medical man alone can judge whether it be requisite to adopt measures calculated to promote its increase.

If the daily application to the medicine chest were confined to the male sex I should not think it worth while to allude to the subject, but as it is one of the chief occupations of women to soothe the sufferer in the hour of sickness, they fancy they *ought* to understand the secrets of a disease they can always alleviate by their tender sympathy, and they consider they have a *right* to give physic, in the hope of affording relief. Although in other respects the expectancies of girls are less than those of their brothers, they are more immediately under their mother's control, and coming in for the largest amount of maternal medicine, they often suffer from this interference, which tends to disturb the *monthly* re-appearance of menstruation—a condition which has already been pointed out as important for the healthy performance of this function.

This brings us to remark on another very important reason for watching over young women with a care proportionate to the delicacy of their constitutions, which is the fact that during the time that follows the first appearance we know not what type the function will assume; and although, in some extremely rare instances, its recurrence every second or third week may coincide with good health, still, as a rule, the monthly type is the criterion of a woman's health. This is the type assumed in the vast majority of women in every country, according to my investigations. Most of the cases which deviate from this law can be traced to an organic or to a nervous derangement of the ovaries or of the womb, so much so that when these diseases are cured the function resumes its most habitual type. On referring to my notes, I find that in twenty-three per cent. it did not follow the monthly type, in seventeen per cent. the type was three weeks, in five per cent. it was every six weeks, in one per cent. it occurred every fortnight. In one half of the three-weekly cases the type was explained by ovario-uterine disease of an organic nature or by chlorosis; and in more than one half of the six-weekly cases the patient's health was habitually bad, owing, in two instances, to

uterine disease, which was also the case with the one that assumed the fortnightly type. That the fortnightly or three-weekly appearance depends sometimes merely on a disturbance of that nervous force which must preside over menstruation, seems to me evident, from the fact that in many cases in which the irregularity could not be explained by organic ovario-uterine disease I have been able to restore the function to its normal type by the exhibition of the sulphate of quinine.* If it be admitted that the monthly is the normal type, it stands to reason that we ought to seek its occurrence, more particularly as its adoption entails a less considerable drain on the sanguineous system, a less considerable perturbation of the nervous function, and affords to women a much longer term of immunity from suffering. It would be imprudent to attempt to bring on the return by direct and energetic means, but it is perfectly reasonable to watch carefully, towards the end of the second or third week, so as to prevent the patient being unduly excited by purgatives, or by any of the causes to which we have alluded. Even supposing these views to be incorrect, the plan recommended is perfectly harmless, and therefore deserves to be put into operation, as it offers the possibility of great utility; and it would be well to continue this unremitting attention, until the function, repeatedly accomplished with regularity, has been confirmed by habit.

In a paper upon the use of purgatives at the different periods of menstruation, lately read before the London Medical Society, I have dwelt on this subject, from the conviction that in the majority of women purgative medicines cannot be given with impunity. Brisk purgatives taken a few days before those symptoms which generally precede each menstrual epoch, often anticipate it by several days, vexing nature in one of her most constant laws, for I find menstruation to have been perfectly regular in 86 per cent. of the women I have interrogated. These views may appear exaggerated, but I am convinced that I have seen the bad results in others, and in my own practice; and in a few cases I can ascribe permanently disordered menstruation to the function having been treated by the patient in the same way as a child plays with a watch, setting the hands backwards and forwards.

These observations apply also to the frequent use of mercury; for I am acquainted with ladies, moving in fashionable circles, who seek to improve their complexion by a frequent use of calomel. They often succeed in producing a delicate, pallid, and unhealthy appearance, but it is generally at the expense of the menstrual flow, which is either diminished or suppressed by those means. In confirmation of this statement I appeal to the experience of Dr. Butler Lane.†

For women to repine against a monthly infirmity, which must have been wisely ordained, is as useless as it is dangerous not to take it into consideration; it should therefore be met by a monthly regimen; not

that I wish to recommend the total seclusion enjoined by Moses, and still practised in eastern nations, nor even the adoption of a well-understood conventional expression, by means of which the Swiss ladies denote their inability to accept an invitation "*Mes cousins sont venus de Lausanne*," or by saying with the Italian fair sex,—" *Il Marchese è arrivato, non passo andare*." Without adopting phraseology, ill-suited to the delicacy of English ladies, is it not possible to find some excuse, if the maintenance of health is at stake, when so many can be found for trivial purposes?

Following a former division, I will now add a few words relative to the management of the corporeal, the emotional, and the mental functions in women at this important time.

I. With respect to the body we shall again, for the sake of clearness, first treat of what should be done, and then of what should be avoided. Amongst the more immediate measures to be employed to bring on the catamenia, or increase them when deficient, may be mentioned a brisk walk, particularly if the patient remain afterwards in a room raised to a higher temperature than usual. Warm drinks taken at night will also assist nature. A hip-bath either of hot water or with the addition of a few ounces of mustard will be of great assistance, and likewise mustard poultices to the lower part of the abdomen and to the thighs. The utility and mode of adapting these mild measures should be understood by all those who have girls intrusted to their care. Should the patient suffer considerably, or be affected with those strange symptoms which are well understood by the term *temper*, a warm purgative may be often administered with advantage the day before the flow is due, and the patient should be kept in bed the greater part of the day following, and be given a mild opiate even if there be no great local pain. If the sufferings are very considerable, and do not abate with the appearance of the flow, the medical attendant should be consulted, for though the belief prevails, that because the function is a natural one, all its attendant sufferings must be endured, this is so little true, that the proper administration of opium frequently alleviates the pains and insures the better performance of the function. From five to ten drops of Squire's solution of bimeconate of morphia, given every three or four hours until the abatement of pain, is a very good preparation.

While thus deprecating the popular prejudice which prevents so many women being relieved from sufferings they were never intended to endure, it will be well to notice another equally deep-rooted and perhaps more dangerous prejudice, which makes them believe, that however great may be the discharge, if it occur periodically, it is in perfect accordance with the views of Nature. Frequently have I drawn a parent's attention to the debility and ill health, following an habitually too copious flow, and as frequently have I obtained the same answer—"She is always so;" so difficult is it to enforce the conviction that the fact of a girl *being always so* is the very reason for adopting such measures as would prevent her *being ever so*.

* On the Treatment of Remittent Menstruation by Sulphate of Quinine, with cases. By E. J. Tilt, M.D., &c., *Lancet*, 1841.

† On Functional Diseases of the Liver, associated with Uterine Derangement. By Butler Lane, M.D. London: Reinsaw. 1848.

* Profuse menstruation may be borne habitually by women of a florid complexion, and who have attained to their full growth; but when it is permitted in girls of a delicate frame, there are no means of strengthening such constitutions, the body never attains its proper proportions, increase of age brings with it no increase of strength, unless, as in some rare instances, child-bearing regulates the function. Even if no organic disease is set up in such constitutions, they become subjected to all sorts of nervous disorders, and the only period of health which women enjoy, is during the few days previous to each recurring epoch.

It is inherent in human nature to prefer the swallowing of medicine, however nauseous, to the irksome exigencies of a well combined plan of action, and the medical man is often asked for something to amend this symptom, but I am unacquainted with any specific capable of checking this prolific source of evil, which can only be safely diminished by the systematic adoption of the various rules I have laid down to promote the healthy action of the nervous functions, and to restrain that morbid irritability of the nervous system which stands in the double relation of effect and cause to profuse menstruation.

Before concluding what I have said relative to the means of increasing a deficient flow, I must briefly allude to the benefit often derived from the use of leeches. By the judicious application of a small number of leeches the medical man will be sometimes able to originate the fluxion of the sanguineous fluid, in accordance with the views of nature. I say the medical man, for he alone can decide whether the application of leeches is necessary, and if so, how many and where they should be applied.

As a result of what has been previously said, damp linen should be most carefully avoided; damp feet should be guarded against by the habit of always changing the shoes on returning from walking. Cold drinks should not be indulged in; nor acid drinks, for their well-known effect is to check a sanguineous flow. Balls and entertainments should be carefully avoided, for as at the menstrual period there is a greater susceptibility to atmospheric influences, the chance of catching cold is increased. Abstinence from such entertainments would also prevent the temptation of taking ices and acidulated drinks, or of dancing too much. Such are the things which should be avoided at certain times by women in good health, but if this time coincides with illness, an additional remark suggests itself. Were women made to understand that the menstrual process is a salutary function, which often alleviates many of their complaints, and sometimes obscures their true nature, they would not choose so inconvenient a time for consulting us, when by stopping at home to nurse themselves they may frequently avoid the necessity of having to seek our advice at all. They should also learn to avoid at those times, all medicine and all hitherto prescribed treatment, unless under the special sanction of the medical attendant; and every girl should be taught the urgency of communicating the fact to her medical adviser whenever she may happen

to be peculiarly circumstanced during illness, for the concealment or ignorance of this important fact has often led to injudicious treatment, and sometimes permanently impaired the patient's health, or at all events prevented speedy restoration by the non-adoption of the most appropriate plan of treatment.

II. With regard to the mental and emotional faculties of woman to which I have already adverted, I shall again observe, that a solid education, or the cultivation of the reasoning powers, more than mere accomplishments, tends to keep in check the eccentric tendencies or morbid emotions. Some days before, and at the time occupied by this function, the head is often very much affected by pain, vertigo, drowsiness, or dulness, in which case it should be less severely taxed than usually; and those occupied in the education of girls should bear in mind not only this, but, likewise, that the same regimen cannot suit all, and that each particular pupil may require a different amount and quality of mental exertion. If excess of mental exercise should be avoided at such times, how much more all undue development of the emotions. This function often necessitates a much stronger appeal to the reasoning powers, or even to the religious feelings than is at first believed. An additional disagreeable is not felt by girls born in poverty and inured to hardships, but young ladies delicately brought up, in the midst of every luxury, when first subjected to this chain, are often painfully affected by so strange a necessity. "Am I to be subject all my life to this disgust?" is an expression which not unfrequently escapes a girl's lips; and if each revolving month brings back the same amount of intense pain, need we wonder if it should sometimes weigh heavily on the spirits, on the temper, and give rise to nervousness and hysteria, to increased repinings or to murmurings against Providence.

There are many reasons which a medical man may suggest to a mother, as best calculated to remove these erroneous impressions. Such as, that man was created independent because destined to govern the family, society, and nature; while woman was made dependent, tied to hearth and home by a long chain of never-ending infirmities, as if to point out the destined sphere where her activity could find more happiness, although a paler glory. Instead, therefore, of despising herself on account of fetters, evidently necessary, or they would never have been imposed, they should be worn with a proud humility, from the knowledge that in some mysterious way they seem to unite her more closely to her dearest earthly ties; from the remembrance also that if women have greater pains to endure, they are endowed with a greater capacity of joy, and that they derive infinitely more pleasure than men from the many forms of the one passion which alone harmonizes the terrible discordances of this world. In addition to these, Holy Writ suggests another, and truly the physiologist can adduce no better reason:—"In sorrow shalt thou bring forth children," was said to woman with reference to uterine parturition, and it seems to me to hold good also in that periodical function which is intimately connected with the parturition of the germ by the ovary, and is,

therefore, accompanied by pains of a similar nature, only much less intense. This is so true, that I do not consider the menstrual function to be healthily performed unless it be accompanied by at least some spinal and ovarian pains. One of the most striking features of chlorosis is the total absence of such pains, and unless they re-appear to some extent, I never consider a chlorotic patient to be permanently cured.

To complete our sketch of that advice which should be imparted to mothers through the medium of the profession, so that they may duly perform their sacred duties, I shall conclude by a few remarks on menstruation during pregnancy and during lactation.

Pregnancy generally checks the periodical flow, but the exceptions to this rule are more numerous than is generally supposed. Thus I find that the flow continued in 8 per cent. In 2 per cent. it continued up to the second month, in 5 per cent. up to the period of quickening, and in one case it continued regularly up to the period of parturition—a circumstance which I have met with in 6 out of the 600 histories of the menstrual function which I have carefully taken down, and I mention the fact because, although its possibility is now admitted by many excellent observers at home and abroad, it was denied by no less an authority than Denman. Certainly a young woman should be warned of the possibility of this occurrence, to prevent alarm and attempts to suppress it, even if it were only to make her aware of the necessity of seeking the advice of the man of science, who can alone distinguish between the flooding, which it is necessary to check, and a natural discharge, which is to be respected; but as the ignorance of this circumstance might be a cause of miscarriage, every young married woman should be informed, that although perfectly regular she may still be pregnant, in order that nervous symptoms which may ensue, as well as vomiting and biliary derangement, may be mildly treated, and not by such energetic measures as might bring on abortion.

Lactation generally checks the flow up to the tenth or eleventh month, but more frequently than is generally believed, the secretion of milk coincides with the periodical flow as early as the second or third month of lactation, and this in perfectly healthy women. As it is impossible to tell which young mother will be the exceptional case, it would be judicious to prepare all for the possibility of the event, so as to preclude the chance of their resorting to measures which might check the flow, to the detriment of their own or their child's health. The medical man must also be prepared with a ready answer to the important question which will be asked,—The courses have re-appeared, am I to continue nursing? Now, if the flow occur at an early period of lactation in a woman enjoying average good health, and if the child be tolerably well, I think it judicious to advise the continuance of suckling, but if it does not happen before the ninth or tenth month of lactation, it is better to wean, even if the milk still agrees with the child. I am aware that this does not accord with the statements of many of the best writers of the last century,

or with popular prejudice; but the permission I give a young mother to continue suckling her child, or to retain the services of a wet nurse, without breaking up her own arrangements, or depriving the servant of her livelihood, is countenanced to my knowledge by the experience of Dr. Trousseau, of Paris, and derives support from the following facts:—

Having carefully interrogated 78 women in whom menstruation had returned at different periods of lactation, I learned that the quantity and quality of the milk remained the same at that time in ... 34
[The thriving of the children being my estimate of the quality of the milk]

That it was diminished at the time only in ... 8
That it was completely arrested in ... 1
That it was impoverished at the time only in ... 4
[By impoverishment the women meant that it looked likewhey, and sickened the children.]

That it impoverished the milk then and thenceforth in ... 1
That it was increased at the time in ... 17
That there was a rush of milk afterwards in ... 13

To test in a still more accurate manner the absence of any pernicious influence of the menstrual function on the milk, I lately requested my friend Dr. Hassall to examine microscopically the milk of a lady taken on the second day of menstruation, which had come on for the first time at the ninth month of lactation, and he reported that the milk was perfectly normal in quality.

We shall here conclude our remarks on the management of women before and after the establishment of menstruation; but the subject would be incomplete without some reflections on their management at the ceasing and after the cessation of that function; an important subject, which will form the matter of a concluding paper.

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In this country, so remarkable for the external manifestations of piety and purity—for the spotless appearance of the “outside of the platter,” there has always been a difficulty in deciding whether we should, as a nation, virtually ignore the existence of prostitution, and that, in an economic point of view, its most disastrous consequence—venereal disease, or whether as in other countries, looking upon fornication as a natural and irrepressible result of human frailty and imperfect social organization combined, some attempt should not be made to render what is inevitable, as far as may be harmless to the