CASE OF ULCERATED STOMACH.

By GEORGE WALDRON, Esq., Surgeon, Bath.

I was sent for early in the morning of November 12th, 1848, to visit a Miss E., 37 years of age, of a dark and sallow complexion. I found her labouring under severe and violent pains in the epigastrium, accompanied with cramps of the extremities, a sharp and vibrating pulse, of little volume, and the body suffused with cold and clammy perspiration. Being informed that she had taken a pill late on the preceding night, and that to the effect of this pill she mainly ascribed her present sufferings and condition, I desired to see the prescription, and found it to contain,—Extr. Aloes, Extr. Rhei utrque, gr. xij.; Extr. Nucis Vomice, gr. vj., in pil. xij. dividend. Capt. j. vel. ij., hora somni, alternis noctibus.

I directed a draught, with sulphuric æther and laudanum, to be immediately administered, and requested Mr. Taylor, my partner, to see Miss E. within the lapse of a few hours, and he then made the following note:—

Quarter-past 12 o'clock p.m. Saw Miss E., who still complains of great pain in the epigastric region; is unable to lie down, and has experienced no relief from the medicine prescribed by Mr. Waldron, this morning at seven o'clock; her countenance is contracted and anxious; she attributes to the pill taken at twelve o'clock on the preceding night the increase of pain, and believes it to be the cause of her present illness; pulse now imperceptible, with cramps in the extremities; cold and clammy perspiration; tongue dry and rugged; great thirst, and prostration of strength. Ordered, in conjunction with Mr. Waldron, Morphine Acetat., gr. ij.; Hydrarg. Chlorid., gr. xij.; Cons. q.s., ut fiant pil. vj. Capt. j., tertius horis, in conjunction with an effervescing mixture. A mustard plaster to be applied over the region of the stomach for twenty-five to thirty minutes.

At 6 o'clock p.m. Miss E. expired, whilst taking a cup of tea.

Autopsy.—The body was spare and emaciated; on opening the abdomen the intestines bore marks of high inflammation, flakes of coagulable lymph were thrown out, and the intestines were everywhere united with their peritoneal covering; in the centre of the stomach, immediately between the greater and lesser curvature on the lower side, an ulcer, about the size of a shilling, was found, with indurated and thickened edges, and of dense and scirrhous hardness; on removing the stomach from the body, a second ulcer was discovered, completely agglutinated with the pancreas and peritoneal covering, and which it would appear guarded the second ulcer from giving way. A large quantity of fluid was found extravasated into the abdomen.

Observations.—As the case at the time excited some interest, it was in every respect well, that a *post-mortem* examination did take place. The suddenness of Miss E.'s death, the nature of the medicine she had taken late on the preceding night, and the impression on her mind and also that of her relatives, that this medicine was the cause of her death and sufferings, rendered the examination imperative. The *modus operandi* of such a combination, on an ulcerated surface, cannot

easily be calculated upon, and one would not desire to hazard an opinion; all that can be said is this,—that Miss E. took a pill of this character, and that next day she died. The examination of the stomach further shewed, that had she not taken the pill her term of days was numbered. Still the violent exacerbation of pain, &c., on the night after the pill was taken, might, and ought to lead medical men to the serious consideration,—how far such a combination of medicine was calculated to do good or harm in such a case, and so far prove beneficial to medical science.

3, Belmont, Bath,

February 9, 1849.

MENTAL INFLUENCE OF THE MOTHER
ON THE CHILDTO THE EDITOR OF THE PROVINCIAL MEDICAL AND
SURGICAL JOURNAL.

SIR,

The mental influence of the mother on the fœtus was fully believed in the olden times, though discredited by medical philosophers of the present day; but general rules may admit of exceptions, and the occasional asserted instances of transmission to the child of maternal mental impressions, which come under the notice of medical practitioners, might be worth some investigation, though almost invariably shunned from the dread of the imputation of credulity or scientific heresy.

The case which I am about to mention certainly presents the semblance of a result of maternal mental influence rather than that of coincidence, and as I can vouch for the facts, they may perhaps be deemed worthy of record.

On the 24th of last October I attended Mrs. A. in her confinement with her fourth child. The labour was natural, and she gave birth to a fine boy, who, on examination was found to suffer severely from hare-lip and cleft palate towards the left side of the mesian line. The former children were perfect. Mrs. B., who I then considered fully six months advanced in pregnancy, saw the child from motives of curiosity. She informed me that she experienced no feeling of alarm, though somewhat surprised at the morbid appearance. I believe she saw the child accidentally on two or three subsequent occasions.

On the night of February the 1st, she herself gave birth to a very fine healthy female infant, quite perfect, but from the septum of the nose extending downwards to the left of the mesian line, and through the thickness of the labial convexity, the outline of a hare-lip was perfectly distinct; on and near the nasal septum small clots of varicose capillaries formed the apex of the figure, the outline then continuing downward with dark lines, and through the thickness of the labial margin a livid hue distinguishes the marked surface from the normal structure. The hard and soft palate are perfect and natural. The child is now a fortnight old, and the mark has faded considerably, and I hope will not disfigure it hereafter. If we are to recognize