

**ART. VI.—*Remarkable Obstetrical Cases.*** By WILLIAM P. JOHNSTON, M. D., Professor of Obstetrics, &c., in the National Medical College, Washington, D. C. (With a wood-cut.)

**CASE I.** *A Male Infant weighing twenty pounds, delivered November 26th, 1848.*—Mrs. L., aged, at the date of her last confinement, thirty-eight years, was married at twenty, and has given birth to thirteen children at term. She is

above the average height of women; of large frame, corpulent, weighing probably two hundred pounds or more. I saw her for the first time during her last pregnancy, on the 9th of November, 1848: I found her suffering very much. Her abdomen was immensely distended, and tender to the touch. The lower limbs were exceedingly œdematous in their entire length. She complained of great stiffness about the hip-joints and knees, which, together with the weight of the abdomen, rendered locomotion very difficult. When lying in bed, it was impossible for her to move her lower limbs without assistance. Her breasts had not enlarged; her pulse was full and strong; tongue clean, red, and tender; acid eructations frequent. She ate but little, and without appetite.

A pint or more of blood was taken from the arm. She was ordered to take lime-water and milk, instead of tea and coffee. Diet to be very light, with very little animal food.

She was better after the bleeding, and she thought that the pain, stiffness, and œdema were somewhat relieved.

On Sunday, November 26th, 1848, at 5½ o'clock A. M., while standing, and without previous pain, the membranes gave way suddenly, with a report sufficiently loud to cause her husband to start from his sleep: the quantity of liquor amnii discharged was said to have been immense.

On my arrival, I found the head of the infant above the superior strait: the pains were feeble, and the os uteri dilated to the size of half a dollar; as the pains increased the os uteri dilated, and the head advanced very gradually in the first presentation. In the cavity of the pelvis, its progress was more rapid; but at the inferior strait there was some delay, notwithstanding the complete relaxation of the soft parts, and the strong bearing-down pains after the head had, with some difficulty, escaped: the infant, which was still alive, made several efforts to cry.

The greatest difficulty was now experienced, for the shoulders were so broad that it was impossible for delivery to be completed without causing one of them to descend at a time. Efforts were made to complete the rotation of the shoulders, and a finger was, with much difficulty, introduced into the left axilla, for which the blunt hook was soon substituted, and traction made in aid of the pains, which were still powerful.

A half hour, at least, was consumed before I succeeded in delivering the left arm. After some further delay, the right arm, which was under the pubis, was brought down.

Some difficulty was also experienced with the breech, but it was finally delivered in about three-quarters of an hour after the head. Unavailing efforts were made to resuscitate the child, which had died from the delay and pressure upon the cord.

The uterus contracted well, and in a short time the placenta was found lying loose in the vagina, and removed. There was but slight hemorrhage. The duration of labour was about eight hours.

In the evening I found her comfortable; after-pains not severe; pulse a little accelerated. There was a constant stillicidium of urine.

Nov. 27.—No fever; pulse 72; urine continues to be discharged in great abundance, and the œdema is rapidly disappearing. Lochia very small in quantity.

From this time convalescence advanced without interruption. There was no milk secreted.

*Weight and dimensions of Mrs. L.'s infant, delivered Nov. 26, 1848 :—*

Weight of infant (male)	- - - - -	20 lbs. exactly
Length	- - - - -	25½ inches.
Breadth across the shoulders	- - - - -	8½ "
"    "    hips	- - - - -	7¾ "
Circumference of thorax, under arms	- - - - -	16½ "
"    around hips	- - - - -	16½ "

*Head.*

Occipito-mental diameter	- - - - -	6¾ "
"    frontal    "	- - - - -	5¾ "
Bi-parietal	- - - - -	4¾ "
Horizontal circumference of head	- - - - -	15¾ "
Circumference of head, around chin and middle anterior fontanelle	- - - - -	16½ "
Placenta weighed	- - - - -	3 lbs.

Cord was of an extraordinary thickness.

*Note.*—It may be well to mention that the instrument used in weighing the infant was tested, at my request, by Messrs. Campbell & Coyle, hardware merchants, and pronounced correct.

CASE II. *Separation of the entire Circumference of the Vaginal portion of the Cervix Uteri, from pressure of the Child's Head during Labour.*—Mrs. D., from Ireland, æt. from thirty to thirty-five, of a strong muscular frame and sanguine temperament, was taken in labour with her first child on the 4th of November, 1845, about 12 M.

The os uteri, when first examined, was found dilated to the size of half a dollar, its edges were thin and hard, membranes somewhat protruding and tense. The anterior lip of the os presented a remarkable prolongation of an inch apparently.

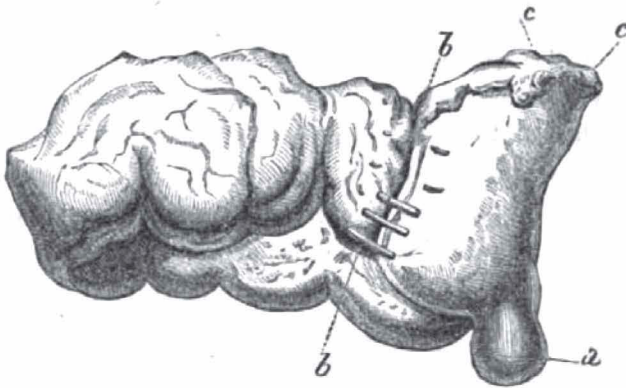
The membranes soon ruptured, and the pains became more energetic. The os uteri and the vagina were nearly free from secretion. The pains became very strong and bearing down. There was frequent vomiting and insatiable thirst.

On the 5th, at 6 A. M. Found that the head of the child had descended, carrying before it the os uteri. The prolongation of the anterior lip was engorged, an inch in thickness, and presented in advance of the vestibulum.



Posteriorly the os uteri was thin, hard, and very rigid. Pulse full and strong; face flushed, and skin hot; vomiting persisting. She was bled from twenty to twenty-four ounces. In the course of the morning, a pint and a half of urine was drawn from the bladder by the aid of a gum-elastic catheter. The bleeding was repeated to the extent of a pint, and the extract of belladonna was applied to the os uteri.

At 10½ P. M., nearly thirty-five hours from the commencement of active labour, the pains having become still more energetic, the head was suddenly delivered, and upon examination it was found that a portion of the cervix had preceded it. Supposing at the moment that the laceration was only partial, I cut across that portion which presented with a pair of scissors; but in a moment after, the body of the child was delivered, when we ascertained that the separation had been nearly complete, the portion attached, and which had to be cut with the scissors, being only about half an inch long. The width of the separated cervix varied from an inch to an inch and a half. See figure.



Neck of Uterus separated during Labour (two-thirds natural size). [Drawn from a specimen preserved in spirit. Cabinet of Prof. Wm. P. Johnston, M. D., Washington, April 2d, 1848.] *a*. Prolongation of anterior lip. *b*. Stitches used to unite the parts severed by the scissors. *c, c*. Portion which remained attached to the womb after delivery of the child, and which had to be separated by the scissors.

The delivery of the child was followed by a gush of very offensive and partially coagulated blood. The placenta had separated before delivery, and was removed. The child was, of course, still-born.

On the 7th, the pulse was 84, skin pleasant, abdomen but little painful to the touch.

In the evening, the pulse rose to 102, and the abdomen became more tender. Ordered calomel gr. v, and Dover's powder gr. x; hop fomentations and an enema.

On the 8th, she was relieved, and convalescence fairly commenced. The lochia were natural.

In a few days, I ascertained that she had imprudently removed to another

house, feeling quite well. The catamenia soon returned, and she experienced no inconvenience from the accident she had sustained.

On the 10th of November, 1846, I went to inquire after the patient, whose case I have given above, when I found her with an infant in her arms of which she had been delivered about two weeks before. Her labour came on without any premonition, and in ten minutes, and before a messenger could be despatched for a physician, the child was delivered.

Her husband died before the birth of the second child, so that she has had no more, but she has enjoyed perfect health.