



PLAYFAIR
System
of
Midwifery
HARRIS.

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A TREATISE
ON
THE SCIENCE AND PRACTICE
OF
MIDWIFERY.

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TO THE UNIVERSITIES OF CAMBRIDGE AND LONDON AND TO
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SIXTH AMERICAN FROM THE EIGHTH ENGLISH EDITION.

WITH NOTES AND ADDITIONS

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WITH FIVE PLATES AND TWO HUNDRED AND SEVENTEEN ILLUSTRATIONS.



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EDITOR'S PREFACE TO SIXTH AMERICAN EDITION.

DURING the intervening four years since the last American edition was issued, very decided advances have been made in the field of obstetric surgery, particularly in the adoption of methods that have resulted in the saving of human life. The conservative Cæsarean operation in the most carefully managed European maternities, and even in the general practice in our own country, may be honestly claimed to save 90 per cent. of the women—16 having died out of 160 cases in certain European hospitals, and 2 out of the last 20 in the United States. The Porro-Cæsarean record of all countries now shows a mortality which has been reduced to 14 per cent., as proven by the record of 1890-1891; and the sub-peritoneal, replacing the fatal intra-peritoneal method, has saved 22 women out of 25. The introduction of symphyseotomy into our country a year ago, has required us to give a special notice to this operation, now so largely performed in Europe, and attracting a growing attention here, because of its possibilities of success. The term *laparotomy*, and the prefix *laparo-*, as applied to abdominal surgery, and not to flank-incisions, have been abandoned throughout the volume, and the term *ceiotomy*, and the prefix *celio-*, substituted for them. Craniotomy having fallen in the estimation of American obstetricians, and some of the younger thinkers of Great Britain, because of the diminishing dangers of Cæsarean and symphyseotomic deliveries, the American editor has striven to do away with the leaning of the English author toward a preference for the infantile destructive method, begotten of opinions based upon comparative results which were prevalent, and thought to be well founded, forty years ago. Notes and additions of the American editor are enclosed in brackets [].

329 SOUTH TWELFTH STREET, PHILADELPHIA.
September, 1893.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE TO THE EIGHTH EDITION.

THE large edition of this Treatise which was published in the spring of 1889 being completely exhausted, the author has subjected the work to a thorough revision. Since 1889 much progress has been made in certain departments of obstetrics which has necessitated changes, amounting to the almost complete rewriting of some of the chapters, as, for instance, those on extra-uterine pregnancy, the Cæsarean section, symphysiotomy, and puerperal septicæmia. Several new illustrations have also been added. He trusts that these alterations may make the present edition a satisfactory guide to the most recent advances in obstetric medicine, and secure for it the same favorable reception which the profession has given to its predecessors, for which he feels very grateful. He has to express his thanks for many letters he has received from students of medicine, in all parts of the country, containing criticisms and suggestions, which all show how carefully the book had been studied, and some of which he has adopted, amongst them the addition of a separate index to the first volume. He has also to express his obligations to his friend and colleague Dr. John Phillips, who, it is to be feared at much inconvenience to himself, has again carefully revised the proof-sheets, and also to his cousin, Dr. Hugh Playfair, for assistance in the same tedious task.

31 GEORGE STREET, HANOVER SQUARE, W.
March, 1893.



AUTHOR'S PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION.

THOSE who have studied the progress of Midwifery know that there is no department of medicine in which more has been done of late years, and none in which modern views of practice differ more widely from those prevalent only a short time ago. The Author's object has been to place in the hands of his readers an epitome of the science and practice of midwifery which embodies all recent advances. He is aware that on certain important points he has recommended practice which not long ago would have been considered heterodox in the extreme, and which, even now, will not meet with general approval. He has, however, the satisfaction of knowing that he has only done so after very deliberate reflection, and with the profound conviction that such changes are right, and that they will stand the test of experience. He has endeavored to dwell especially on the practical part of the subject, so as to make the work a useful guide in this most anxious and most responsible branch of the profession. It is admitted by all, that emergencies and difficulties arise more often in this than in any other branch of practice; and there is no part of the practitioner's work which requires more thorough knowledge or greater experience. It is, moreover, a lamentable fact that students generally leave their schools more ignorant of obstetrics than of any other subject. So long as the absurd regulations exist which oblige the lecturer on midwifery to attempt the impossible task of teaching obstetrics in a short three months' course—an absurdity which has over and over again been pointed out—such must of necessity be the case. This must be the Author's excuse for dwelling on many topics at greater length than some will doubtless think their importance merits, since he desires to place in the hands of his students a work which may in some measure supply the inevitable defects of his lectures.

Many of the illustrations are copied from previous authors, while some are original. The following quotation from the preface to Tyler Smith's *Manual of Obstetrics* will explain why the source of the copied woodcuts has not been in each instance acknowledged: "When I began to publish, I determined to give the authority for every woodcut copied from other works. I soon found, however, that obstetric authors of all countries, from the time of Mauriceau downward, had copied each other so freely without acknowledgment as to render it difficult or impossible to trace the originals."

The Author has to express his acknowledgments to many friends for their kind assistance by the loan of illustrations and otherwise, and more especially to his colleague, Dr. Hayes, for his valuable aid in passing the work through the press.

31 GEORGE STREET, HANOVER SQUARE.
March, 1876.

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