X. *A History of a large Tumour, in the Region of the Abdomen, containing Hair.* By John Warren, Esq. F. A. A. and M. S. and Professor of Anatomy and Surgery in the University of Cambridge. — From the *Memoirs of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences*, Vol. I. 4to. Boston, 1785.

AN aversion to the making of large incisions into such tumours as have appeared to have been seated within the cavity of the abdomen, has perhaps often been the reason why those of them which have happened to contain a substance less fluid than pus have either induced a hectic, from a copious absorption of the thinner and more acrid parts, or have speedily been followed by a fatal termination. The following history may in some measure evince the safety of such large and free openings in cases of this kind; but the facts contained in it may also admit of an application to the purpose of explaining certain phenomena in the animal œconomy.

The production of hair in the human body, though it has often been the subject of accurate examination, and ingenious speculation, has perhaps never yet been satisfactorily accounted for; or, to say the least, the solution is still
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defitute of that support and conviction which, in most other physiological inquiries, have so happily been attained.

Admitting the position, that many, if not all the interior parts of the body are furnished with the necessary fluids for the growth of this substance, an accurate attention to the circumstances under which it is really produced, and to the nature of the parts in which it is most frequently found, must undoubtedly afford very considerable light on the subject; and from a large number of such facts, carefully and judiciously collected, it is not improbable that every doubt and difficulty attending the investigation may be entirely removed.

Z—— H——, a negro woman, about thirty-two years of age, early in the year 1783 applied for medical assistance in a case of a swelling in the abdomen, which had become extremely painful, and which began to be attended with very threatening symptoms. On examination, a very large tumour was found seated chiefly on the left side, occupying the whole space between the left os ilium and the left inferior ribs, and extending over to the right of the umbilical region, pointing a little to the left of the navel, considerably hard, and

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extremely sensible. Upon inquiry into the origin of the tumour, it appeared, that the patient had first complained of pain in the left groin, and a general enlargement of the abdomen, immediately after delivery of her third child: this gradually increased after two successive labours, and since the birth of her last child, now about twelve years of ago, had been almost constantly painful, though by no means in a very distressing degree, until about three weeks prior to her application for advice. At this period her complaints were greatly exasperated, in consequence of catching cold at the time of the catamenial evacuation, by which a total suppression was induced. The common discutient topical applications were immediately made use of; the usual methods were employed to renew the discharge; but all to no purpose. The swelling constantly increased for about three weeks, when an evident tendency to suppuration being perceived, the method of cure was immediately altered from a discutient to a suppurative process. In about two weeks a fluctuation was perceptible, and at the end of two more an opening into the cavity of the tumour was determined upon.

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An extensive incision was accordingly made through the rectus muscle, at a sufficient distance from the usual course of the epigastric artery to avoid all danger of wounding it, and about a pint of watery matter immediately issued through the orifice; after which about the same quantity of pure pus was discharged.

On introducing two or three fingers into the cavity, a quantity of soft substance was felt within it, much about the consistency of soft sope. I immediately made use of a table spoon as the most convenient instrument that could be readily procured for extracting it, and about a pound of it was at this time obtained; after which a degree of faintness began to ensue, the wound was dressed, and the patient placed in her bed in a proper situation for admitting of a free discharge of any fluid that might still be retained.

At the three or four succeeding dressings a portion of the same substance was taken out, till the whole being extracted, it amounted to the quantity of about four pounds.

At each dressing the matter was particularly examined, and was found to contain a large quantity of short hair or wool, about three quarters of an inch long, uniformly mixed with

with it, as is seen in the specimen herewith presented for the inspection of the Academy.

In each hair was discoverable by the naked eye a bulbous root, and a pointed extremity, both perfectly similar to what is seen in an entire hair produced naturally in other parts of the body. After the removal of the whole substance, the hand was passed into and round the cavity in search of bone, or any other foreign body which might be contained within it; but though some of the gentlemen present, on supposition of an extra-uterine foetus, expected to have found the former, yet nothing of either could be felt, though every part was fairly accessible. From this examination it evidently appeared that the matter extracted had been contained in a sac which firmly adhered to the peritoneum, a circumstance, I believe, generally attendant on suppurations in the viscera of the abdomen, as the natural consequence of previous inflammation.

On being exposed to the heat of the fire in an open vessel, it emitted a strong urinous smell, and was attended in other respects with most of the appearances usually exhibited in the broiling of animal substances. The action of flame produced a smart and continued decrepitation

crepitation of the salt contained in it, until the whole was reduced to a simple coal; but no signs of inflammability, or the presence of any oily substance, were perceptible. When boiled, the water made use of in the process was very little changed as to its sensible properties; but after standing some time in a vessel to cool, it deposited a sediment which was suspected to be an alkaline salt, and which accordingly readily fermented with the vitriolic acid.

The patient, from the use of the bark, superficial dressings, and a restorative diet, was, in about three months, enabled to enter upon her usual employment, which was business of the most laborious kind. She had during her illness been much reduced, and for some time continued in an emaciated state, yet she now enjoys perfect health, and has become moderately corpulent. The catamenial evacuation has been regularly performed; but no signs of pregnancy have ever appeared, though, before her sickness, she had borne children uncommonly fast.

Many of the practitioners in the town of Boston were called in to visit the patient, and various were the conjectures upon the nature of the case. The absence of all the usual signs
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of pregnancy, except at those periods which regularly preceded the respective deliveries above mentioned, is a strong argument against the hypothesis of an extra-uterine foetus; and it should seem by no means admissible that the bones should have been so perfectly dissolved as to have formed with the muscular, and other soft parts of a foetus, one uniform and apparently homogeneous mass of matter. Are we not authorized, from the general complexion of the case, particularly from the pain in the groin of the affected side, to pronounce the ovarium to have been the suffering part? The attachment of the ligamentum rotundum of the uterus to the adipose substance in the groin, seems to point out, either the uterus, or some other part connected with it, as the seat of the disorder.

A diseased ovarium may easily be conceived to acquire a size too great to admit of its being contained in the pelvis, and from its elevation in the abdominal region, the uterus itself might also be raised, and a distention of the ligament thereby be produced. But it is farther probable, that from an immediate adhesion of the ovarium to the neighbouring part of the uterus, the inflammation with which those parts might be

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be affected would extend to the ligament itself; the former cause operating in conjunction with this, would sufficiently account for the pain in the groin of the affected side; and the application of this reasoning in the above instance, together with the other facts contained in the history, might enable us, without much difficulty, to form a pretty sure diagnosis of the disease.

XI. *An Account of the Horn Distemper in Cattle, with Observations on that Disease. By the Hon. Cotton Tufts, M. D. F. A. A. and M. S. In a Letter to the Rev. Joseph Willard, Cor. Sec. A. A. — From the Memoirs of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, Vol. I. 4to. Boston, 1785.*

BEASTS of the forest, guided by the dictates of nature, and uncontrolled by man in their food, air, exercise, and rest, are seldom affected with any disease; whilst, in almost all countries, the domestic kind, that are more immediately under the government of man, are subject to a variety.

Scarcely an instance in this country of reigning sickness among tame or wild beasts has