

## MEDICAL HISTORY OF WOMAN IN SOUTHERN INDIA.

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BELIEVING that an article of some interest may be written on the above subject, I purpose here detailing the ceremonies performed by the four principal castes of Southern India at different periods of woman's life; viz., *Brahmins*, *Hindoos* or *Malabars*, *Mahomedans*, and *Pariahs*; and will give under each head the mode of treatment and the ceremonies observed by each, from the period of menstruation to that of childbed, with a few instances to illustrate the kind of obstetrical practice carried out in this country.

The age of puberty varies much, depending on constitutional peculiarity, mode of life, &c. The most usual age is between eleven and twelve, next in order follow the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth years, very few exceeding the latter; although there are instances in which menstruation has occurred much earlier and later in life, but these are quite exceptional.

The earliest cases that have come under my own observation were between the tenth and eleventh years, and the latest at twenty. As a rule, Brahmin and other high caste girls attain maturity much earlier than those of low caste, more particularly Brahmins. The premonitory symptoms are the same as elsewhere, namely, pains in the back and loins, accompanied by headache, &c. The earliest age at which girls in India are betrothed is at six months. From that time to the age of puberty marriage may take place.

Brahmins are very anxious to marry their girls early. An uncle, paternal or maternal, may marry his niece. The girl lives with her parents till she attains maturity, when she is taken to her husband's house.

*Brahmins.*

When a girl of this caste menstruates for the first time, she should be seen by a married woman, whose husband is living, and be found dressed in a white or red cloth; other colours, particularly black, being considered very unfortunate. As soon as her condition is ascertained, she is fed with a pint of milk and a few plantains, and is confined in a separate apartment with some girls of her own age, but who have not menstruated, as companions, and they are fed on cakes, sweetmeats, &c., for the three days they keep her company. Every evening her female friends and neighbours assemble and sing some traditional songs, clapping their hands, &c. They are entertained with betel and fruit, and their hands and faces smeared with turmeric, after which they retire.

On the third evening the male and female friends are invited to eat with the girl's parents, the males and females having their food served up separately.

During the preceding three days the girl has been unwashed; on the fourth morning she has a warm bath, and if her betrothed husband be in the town, he is sent for and sits with her, while married women smear them with sweet oil,<sup>1</sup> after which they are bathed separately, and should the day not be considered propitious, a ceremony termed in Tamil "*Nava keraka shauthee onussu*," or worship of the nine planets, is thus carried out.

Nine different kinds of grain, about half a pound of each, are placed separately, and a new earthen chatty, covered with a net of white thread, is placed on the grains, and in its mouth a bunch of mango leaves, on which a covenant is placed. Nine Brahmins sit around this, and the priest offers up some "*muntras*"<sup>2</sup> which are repeated nine times, when the grain is divided between the Brahmins, and a piece of new cloth given to each. The relatives and friends of the girl meet and partake of food together. On the

<sup>1</sup> Gingalee oil.

<sup>2</sup> Prayers.

evening of the same day, the girl and her husband sit under a pendall<sup>1</sup> of green leaves previously erected in front of the house ; some unmeaning ceremonies are observed, and should there be no particular reason for deferring it, the marriage which took place during childhood is consummated ; and the parents of the girl present her husband with a complete set of brass household utensils, men's and women's garments ; and jewels of silver and gold, according to the wealth of the parties, are placed on the bride.

The cloth, the "*raviki*" or jacket, the glass and comb she used during menstruation, are given to the washerman, with half a rupee.

Astrology is consulted on these occasions, as there are lucky and unlucky days on which this may take place, and there are several stars under which, if a girl happens to menstruate for the first time, her husband is not permitted to see her for three, six, or twelve months, at the expiration of which time only, the marital rates can be consummated. If a girl does not marry before menstruation, she is considered a misfortune to the family, and is turned out of house and caste.

During the time that a woman of caste menstruates she is considered unclean, and not allowed to remain in the house, but takes up her abode in the outer verandah facing the street, where she may be seen with her tota or jamboo.<sup>2</sup>

On the third month after a woman conceives, her relations are invited, a good and propitious day having been previously ascertained from the astrologer. The woman is adorned with flowers and jewels, and great rejoicings are made ; this is repeated on the fifth month, when her relations are fed, and on the seventh, eighth, or ninth month the ceremony of "*Seeminithum*" or second marriage is performed, when the husband and wife sit together, and the female friends and relatives assemble to perform certain ceremonies to blight the "*evil eye*," which ceremony they call "*Arati*."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> A kind of booth made of sticks, and decorated with green leaves, &c.

<sup>2</sup> A small brass pot for containing water.

<sup>3</sup> *Vide* page 109 for explanations.

When the woman is taken with labour pains her relations and intimate female friends come in and crowd around the sufferer, interfering with the ventilation, which is already limited. She is directed to relieve herself by walking about, and the midwife is sent for, although usually an experienced old woman of the family acts as such. She rubs her with oil and bathes her back, loins, and lower extremities in warm water; if the pains are false, the woman may partake of food, but after the commencement of labour nothing is given. She is made to sit with her legs extended, and her back supported by a woman tilting behind, whilst the nurse shampoos her back and loins, and her friends keep up a continual noise by talking.

Prior to the rupture of the membranes the nurse places a bag filled with ashes under the perinæum as a support, and to prevent her clothes being stained.

The pelvis and abdomen are well rubbed with lamp-oil,<sup>1</sup> and shaken several times to promote speedy delivery. The membranes are not ruptured; this is left to nature without regard to time. When the head protrudes, the nurse supports it with her hands, and directs the woman to lie on her back. After the birth of the child one end of the patient's cloth is tied as a binder round the abdomen and pelvis.

Should the placenta not be expelled, they direct the woman to chew a lock of her hair, which induces sickness and thereby brings on uterine action; if this is not successful, they draw on the placenta by the funis to detach it from the uterus. The soiled clothes are now removed, and clean ones substituted.

The child is placed on paddy, varying in quantity according to circumstances (usually about six pounds). A piece of rag is tied on the funis about four inches from the umbilicus; the cord is divided on the placental side with a corn sickle, and the cut end covered with burnt rags, or black paper, or with a paste made of ashes and water. The paddy, with two and a half annas, are given to the nurse,

<sup>1</sup> Ol. Ricini (inermis).

who also receives oil and betel nut every morning until the twelfth day, when two pounds of rice, half a pound of dholl,<sup>1</sup> chillies,<sup>2</sup> curry stuffs,<sup>3</sup> an old cloth, and a rupee are given her. She is supplied with food during the time of her attendance by some. The cloth the woman wore during labour is given to the washerman.

For the first three days after delivery, a quarter palam<sup>4</sup> of assafoetida fried in a small quantity of oil is given to the lying-in woman to preserve the heat of the body, and to act on the bowels. No food or water is given until the fourth day, but if the patient complains of great thirst, a decoction composed of the following ingredients is administered: half a palam dry ginger, quarter of a palam turmeric, and half a pound of Bishop's weed, and are beaten up in half a gallon of water, and boiled until the water is reduced to a pint. When necessary, the assafoetida is followed by six cloves of clean garlic fried in an ounce of margasa<sup>5</sup> oil; this is again followed by three pinches of brickdust, half a palam of turmeric, and half a palam of neem leaf beaten up with water in a mass, made into three boluses, and given to keep up the lochia. On the second day, one palam of Bishop's weed seed powdered and one palam of palm sugar are mixed and given early in the morning, followed by two palams of *Kayam* powder, composed of the ingredients noted in the appendix (page 120), separately fried in an earthen vessel, and well pounded together in a mortar with one pound of palm sugar. On the third day, the same quantity of the *kayam* powder and three cloves of clean garlic are beaten with a little palm sugar made into a bolus, and given to the patient, who is now washed as far as the loins with tepid water, and on the fourth day is placed on the following diet: boiled rice, half a pound; *Bergera Königii* (cariapilly leaves),

<sup>1</sup> Pea of the *Cystus cajunus*.

<sup>2</sup> *Capsicum arnium*.

<sup>3</sup> Condiments.

<sup>4</sup> Equivalent to 1½ oz. apothecary's weight.

<sup>5</sup> Neem or *Melia Azadirachta*.

<sup>6</sup> A Tamil word meaning medicine prepared for a woman in childbed.

half a palam ; black pepper, quarter of a palam ; cammin seed, one eighth of a palam ; chillies, one quarter of a palam ; and salt, one eighth of a palam. These ingredients are fried, powdered, and mixed with the rice. Water warmed by the immersion of heated iron is given as a drink. On the fifth day a small quantity of tamarind<sup>1</sup> previously burnt in the fire is mixed with the curry, and this diet and the above quantity of the kayam powder are continued until the ninth day, when the patient is rubbed with heated oil, and bathed in warm water in which mango,<sup>2</sup> guana,<sup>3</sup> orange, and neem leaves have been boiled, at the rate of two pounds to a gallon of water. On the eleventh day, the ceremony of purification takes place. The house and the persons and clothes of all its inhabitants are washed, and the house sprinkled with cowdung and water. The soiled clothes of the woman are also sent to be washed.

The *Purohita*<sup>4</sup> is now sent for, and he causes the woman to sit by the side of her husband with the child in her arms ; sacrifices are offered to *Ganesa* their household deity, and consecrated water is sprinkled over the husband and wife, and subsequently over the whole house, which with its inhabitants is now considered clean. The lying-in woman alone is not yet purified, and for the space of a month after her confinement is kept apart, and not allowed to touch the household furniture and utensils until the expiration of the said time, when she is allowed to resume her usual avocations.

#### *Treatment of the newborn child.*

Immediately after the funis is cut the child is washed in tepid water, and until the third day is fed on boiled honey, as until that time the mother is not allowed to suckle it ; and if the external parts are cold, five drops of the milk

<sup>1</sup> Fruit of the *Tamarindus indica*.

<sup>2</sup> *Mangafera indica*.

<sup>3</sup> *Piedium pomiferum*.

<sup>4</sup> A Brahmin Astrologer, priest, and master of the ceremonies.

hedge (*Euphorbia Tirucalli*) are given it. On the third day it is rubbed all over with sweet oil; bathed in warm water and half a pie<sup>1</sup> weight of garlic; one quarter pie weight of black pepper, heated in a kin weight of castor oil, is given, and the dose is continued every second day. Some give castor oil night and morning for the first, once a day for the second, and every other day for the third month. From the third day the mother is allowed to suckle her child; if she is not able to do so, it is brought up on goats', cows', or asses' milk.

There are no particular rules about lactation, but it is considered very prejudicial to the infant for the mother to suckle it during her next pregnancy, but this is not much attended to. The child receives its name on the twelfth day after birth. The parents sit down, the mother holding the child in her arms, while the assembled Brahmins stand around them. Some uncooked rice is now spread on the ground, on which the father writes the date of birth, the planet under which the child was born, and the name that he intends to give it; the *Purohita* offers up some prayers, the father calls the child thrice by its name, and the Brahmins are fed and presented with betel, &c., which terminates the ceremony. At six months the child receives solid food, when the ceremony called "*Arati*" is performed. It consists of burning a piece of camphor on a brass plate, and moving it in a circle around the parties; some substitute turmeric and lime water which becomes red when mixed for the camphor. This ceremony is performed to blight the "*evil eye*."

The shaving of the child's head, piercing its ears to receive jewels, &c., and investing it with the sacred card, are all performed with numerous ceremonies.

If a first born child dies at birth or is stillborn, it is usual to place the body in a chatty or earthen vessel, and bury it in the house, and after three months have elapsed it is buried elsewhere, as the skulls, finger nails, &c., are in great requi-

<sup>1</sup> A pie is equal to thirty-four grains.

sition by magicians to perform their charms. Children are never burned.

### *Widows.*

Early on the morning of the tenth day after the death of her husband, the Brahmin widow is bathed and adorned with jewels and flowers; her relatives and friends assemble round and lament with her. After some time thus spent she is conducted to the nearest tank by both male and female relatives, where the Purohita Brahmin offers up prayers; some rice is cooked and given to the widow, who again laments with her friends; after which all the women except the bereaved wife and another widow, old and barren, bathe and return to their houses.

The marriage symbol or "*Thallu*" is cut off the widow's neck from behind by the old woman who remains. The widow after divesting herself of her jewels is again bathed and her head shaved, and after being bathed a third time is made to sit alone. If she has a son, he brings her a white or red cloth (black being prohibited), and puts it around her neck. Her father and mother then come, and each put a cloth around her, but she must wear the one given her by her son. She is now conveyed home in a cart. The male relatives continue at the tank, and if the deceased has left a son, various unmeaning ceremonies are performed, and alms given to Brahmins in the shape of money, food, or clothes, benches, wooden clogs, &c., according to the means of the giver. This is considered an important ceremony, and large sums of money are expended on such occasions. If poor, they will not only spend all they possess, but borrow to make the ceremony as imposing as possible.

Should the widow be a virgin and not have attained puberty, she is allowed all the privileges of a wife until menstruation occurs; and on the third or fourth day after its appearance, the marriage symbol is removed. As described above, the widow is not allowed the use of turmeric,<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Curcuma longa*.

finger or toe rings, armlets, bracelets or anklets, but may wear other ornaments, and her jacket if she pleases, until she attains her twenty-fifth year, when, whether she likes it or not, her head is shaved, she is prohibited the use of ornaments, of her jacket, &c.

Should the widow be "*enceinte*," this ceremony is deferred until one year after delivery. The cloth and jacket she wore whilst being shaved is given to the barber, with a quarter or half a rupee.

A subdivision of Hindoos called "*Coomittees*" exactly copy the Brahmins in their widowhood ceremonies.

### *Malabars.*

When a girl of this caste attains the age at which she is likely to menstruate, she is not allowed to wear any but a white cloth, as, if she happens to be dressed in a coloured one, it is considered very unfortunate, while white is a sign of long life and happiness both to herself and husband.

When she first menstruates she is placed in a separate apartment, and some sweet oil mixed with the yolks of two or three eggs and sugar are given her. This is continued for nine days, during which time her diet consists of cakes and "*sweetmeats*."<sup>1</sup> She is bathed every day, dressed in clean clothes, and adorned with jewels, flowers, &c.

The day on which menstruation takes place should be a propitious one, and under a fortunate planet; to ascertain this, astrologers are consulted. Sometimes a good day is fixed on which the girl is declared to have menstruated, before such is the case. In some subdivisions of this, as well as in other and lower castes, every means are resorted to to bring on the menses before the natural time. The juice of the green leaves of the bamboo,<sup>2</sup> pepper, assafoetida, and other spices are administered, and lascivious stories related to excite the system. This is done that the marriage

<sup>1</sup> Preparations of flour, sugar, and melted butter termed ghee, or with gingalee oil.

<sup>2</sup> *Bambusa arundinacea*.

may be consummated early, and the girl taken to her husband's house.

The management of labour is the same as among the Brahmins, except that the patient is allowed to eat on the third instead of on the fourth day, and in the course of the second day, five palams of kayam powder are given, and a quarter of a palam every other day until the ninth day.

The child is not placed on paddy<sup>1</sup> when the funis is cut, as amongst the Brahmins. The rich give the midwife her meals every day; the poor only on the third, fifth, seventh, and tenth days, when she receives rice, one ounce of sweet oil, curry stuffs, and dholl; on the tenth day she is dismissed with her hire, which varies according to the circumstances of the family to three and a half rupees and a cloth. The washerman receives the same amount for lending the woman a change of cloth every other day.

### *Widows.*

On the fifteenth night after the husband's death the relatives assemble, and the widow is bathed and adorned with jewels by her female relatives, who weep with her until 4 a.m., when the marriage string is cut as among the Brahmins; she is then bathed, and sits in a corner where her children first come to her, these are soon followed by her relations, who put a common red cloth around her neck. At daylight the male relatives go and bathe in a tank and perform the usual ceremonies in the name of the deceased through a Brahmin priest, and the widow's son, should she have one. If she has no son, natural or adopted, through her cousins. These ceremonies differ but little from the Brahmin; a Brahmin priest performs the usual rites, and alms are given to Brahmins.

Should widowhood occur prior to menstruation the marriage symbol is at once removed; but the widow is allowed to wear jewellery, &c., until menstruation appears.

<sup>1</sup> Unhusked grain of the oriza sativa.

*Mahomedans.*

On its being ascertained that a girl has menstruated for the first time, she is placed alone in a retired apartment, and about ten grains of myrrh are given her three times that day, the two following days it is given her twice a day. The diet consists of rice with sugar and ghee, and cakes of benjamin<sup>1</sup> or rice cooked with fenugreek seeds,<sup>2</sup> and dry cocoa-nut kernels. On the fourth day chicken mulligatawny and rice are given; and on the sixth day, the friends of the girl assemble to see her bathed in cold water, when the following ingredients are placed in a new earthen chattie: two cashew nuts,<sup>3</sup> two folds of betel,<sup>4</sup> one common gall seed,<sup>5</sup> five of a smaller kind,<sup>6</sup> six betel nuts,<sup>7</sup> and a small quantity of scent made of the roots of certain grasses,<sup>8</sup> the mouth is tied over with a piece of red muslin, and the chattie filled with water poured through the muslin by five young married women, each of whom throws the water from the chattie on the girl's head twice. The vessel is re-filled as soon as emptied. After this the girl is dressed in new clothes, and during that day and night music and singing are carried on in the house, and friends and relatives entertained.

When a woman becomes pregnant for the first time, on the seventh month she is taken to a garden where a booth has been erected for the occasion, kept there for two or three days, and friends entertained with music and dancing.

When taken with pains all female friends assemble, the midwife is sent for, and on the birth of the child, all the relations present place two, four, eight annas, or a rupee,

<sup>1</sup> Resin of the *Styrax Benzoin*.

<sup>2</sup> *Trigonella Fænum Græcum*.

<sup>3</sup> Fruit of the *Anacardium Occidentale*.

<sup>4</sup> Betel piper leaves.

<sup>5</sup> *Terminalia chebula*.

<sup>6</sup> The young fruit of the above.

<sup>7</sup> *Areca catechu*.

<sup>8</sup> *Andropogon citratus*, *martini*, and *muricatus*.

according to their means, on its navel as an offering, and the navel string is divided by the midwife.

The placenta is put in an earthen chattie with a fold of betel leaves, a marking nut,<sup>1</sup> a piece of saffron,<sup>2</sup> and an iron nail.

The chattie is buried in the compound under the eaves of the house, or should there be a spout from the roof under it.

When the mother and child have been wrapped in clean clothes, they are removed to a close room, to avoid draughts. The cazec is sent for, and he blows into the child's ear the "*Muezzan*" or summons to prayers; after which some good breast milk is drawn from among the neighbours and friends assembled, and given to the child, who for three days receives the juice of the black betel leaf,<sup>3</sup> and the sap of the "*Euphorbia Tirucali*" is given two or three times daily; on the third day it is suckled by the mother. The diet of the mother on the second day consists of bread, and an infusion of cumin seeds.<sup>4</sup> On the fifth day a religious ceremony is performed, and the child receives its name. If a girl sugar-candy, and if a boy "sweetmeats," with betel, &c., are distributed to the friends. The midwife receives rations of rice, dhall, condiments, &c., and her hire, according to the means of the people. The washerman receives the same rations and money.

On the twelfth, twentieth, and thirtieth days, the mother and child are bathed, and friends entertained; on the fortieth day presents of clothing are exchanged between the friends of the husband and wife.

### *Widows.*

Mussulmen widows in Southern India are not allowed to see any males, not even their nearest relatives, for forty

<sup>1</sup> *Anacardium semicarpus*.

<sup>2</sup> *Curcuma longa*.

<sup>3</sup> Black variety of the betel piper.

<sup>4</sup> *Cuminum cyminum*.

days after the husband's death. At the end of that time, the widow is dressed in new clothes by her relations and friends, and a religious ceremony termed "*Fatiha*" is carried out, when feasting, &c., takes place, and the widow is at liberty to marry again if she pleases.

But should she be "*enceinte*," the "*Fatiha*" is carried out at the usual time, but the widow is not allowed to adorn herself until forty days after childbirth.

### *Pariahs.*

In this and other low castes, menstruation usually shows itself between twelve and sixteen years of age. The appearance of the menses should first be ascertained by a young woman, if by an old one it is considered a bad sign. The girl is immediately bathed, and placed under a temporary booth made of cocoa-nut and other green leaves. She is not allowed to be seen during the time that she is ill by a male, and is bathed every day, and two or three raw eggs, with an equal quantity of sweet oil, are given to her.

The diet consists of rice cakes, &c.; on the seventh day feasting takes place among the relations and friends.

The treatment during and after delivery is much the same as elsewhere described. The ceremonies on widowhood are slightly modified from those in use among the Brahmins, and the rites are performed by a Pandaram.<sup>1</sup>

Religious and other ceremonies are not much observed among the Pariahs.

### *Midwives.*

The barber-women are the usual professional midwives, but this office is not confined exclusively to them, but is performed by all low castes. Generally, however, some old woman in the family affords the necessary assistance. Their

<sup>1</sup> A devotee of the Siva sect.

treatment is in most instances the same as that above described; some, however, place the patient in different positions. By some she is made to sit with her legs extended, leaning her chest on pillows, and with her hands on the ground; others keep the woman standing during the first stage of labour, urging her to exert her force on a rope attached to the ceiling; and kneeling when the head presents itself. In some cases the nurse sits on the ground with her knees raised, and makes the woman sit on her ankles, with her legs extended, and embracing the legs of the nurse, who at the same time uses pressure about the loins, and sides of the abdomen and pelvis. Much rude force is used by them. On one occasion when called to see a patient, I found two women seated, one on each side, pulling at a cotton rope encircled round the unfortunate woman's abdomen, "to prevent," as they said, "the child going up." In another instance, a case of premature labour, the uterus was inverted from the force used to draw away the placenta.

A native midwife will pass her hand up the uterus, and pulls at anything she can get hold of; thus the arms are frequently torn away from the foetus, or the shoulder becomes so impacted in the pelvic cavity that it requires much time and care to dislodge it.

In tedious or unnatural labours, they are totally at a loss, and unable to render any assistance; but some will try to extract the child from the vaginal orifice by dragging and pushing their forefinger in the axilla and pulling. If this fails, they leave it to nature as a hopeless case, or apply for European treatment. Where the foetal head is in the vaginal orifice, and the pains have no effect, or have ceased, no remedies are resorted to. They place great faith in charms and incantations, and in cases where all else has failed, these are employed. A few mystic words whispered into some water which is given internally, or sprinkled over the abdomen and passages; or incantations addressed to a deity, and a few neem<sup>1</sup> leaf twigs shaken over some oil,

<sup>1</sup> Melia Azadirnachtsa.

which is given internally, and rubbed over the abdomen and passages, are expected to work wonders. Among Musselmen great faith is placed in a few words from the Koran written on a piece of paper, and chewed with some water. By some persons, a copper bangle containing a vegetable root is worn as an amulet, and is supposed to ensure speedy delivery. They also assert that a plant exists (the name of which they will not disclose), which, when a woman is suffering from protracted labour, they root up, uttering at the same time some magical words, upon which the patient is instantly delivered.

In complications during convalescence, which require the administration of active remedies, a native doctor is applied to.

After childbirth, they prescribe the most stimulant remedies, to keep cold out of the system, of which they are in great dread, as they fear it will give them tetanus. Assa-fœtida and brandy are household remedies, and are freely administered. As soon as a woman is confined, they come begging for brandy. On one occasion I called in to see a Mussulman woman I had relieved of a cross birth a couple of hours before. I found her up, and sitting over a vessel containing country *arrack*. On asking her what she was about, she replied "that she was steaming herself to keep out cold." On another occasion, I was called to see the wife of an officer's servant who was said to be raving. I found the patient as drunk as she could be, for a bottle of brandy had been administered to her in the course of six hours, as her husband said to "keep off a fever she had taken from cold." She was a young girl of sixteen, and that was her first child; she was quite well a couple of days after.

Cloths steeped in brandy or other spirits are frequently introduced into the uterus and passages, and if the lochial discharge is not free, the milk of the *Euphorbia Tirucalli*, or of the *Calotropis Gigantea*, both powerful irritants, is used in the same manner.

As may be supposed, almost every disease of the uterus and passages is met with. I have had several cases of

violent inflammation from the practice of introducing stimulants into the uterus.

Although the natives have so little obstetrical knowledge, they are so tenacious of their caste and customs, and have such an unconquerable objection to manual vaginal examinations, that it is very seldom they apply for European aid, and then only in cases where they have completely failed. It requires ocular demonstration to believe the state in which the unfortunate creatures are brought in for relief. In every instance, the patient has been in labour three or four days, the child is usually dead, and the mother so exhausted that it is necessary to administer nourishment and stimulants largely before any relief can be given. The labia, pudenda, &c., enormously swollen; the passages hot and dry; the head firmly impacted in the pelvic cavity; the uterus paralysed; pulse upwards of 130; bowels costive for four or five days; the bladder distended, and in some cases extending up to the umbilicus, may serve as examples of the conditions under which they apply. Extrusion of the arms, of the arms and funis, or of the funis itself, is no uncommon thing. In most cases, by timely application, both mother and child might have been saved; however, it is gratifying to state, that even under these aggravated circumstances the majority of the mothers are saved if they are allowed to remain a few days in hospital after confinement.

They have a great objection to take females in labour to a public hospital, and the only object they have in view is that the patient should be delivered; as soon as this is effected, they wish to carry her away again. It is very difficult to prevent their doing this; and many instances have occurred in which had the patients been left in hospital a few days, they would probably have recovered, but their lives have been sacrificed to ignorance and superstition. Should the patient die in hospital, they cannot, by the rules of caste, take the body home again.

It is almost impossible to attend the poor in their own huts, they are so small, and have no opening but a door three feet in height and two in width. They have no

furniture; one has to squat on the ground alongside of the patient, who lies on a mat, or on the ground, and the heat together with the want of ventilation consequent on the crowding of friends and relatives is insufferable. None but those who have had experience in midwifery practice among the natives can understand the difficulties that lie in one's way.

Yet it is pleasing to state that a change is coming over the natives, and obstetric science is becoming more and more appreciated.

#### *General Remarks.*

Woman in India is the slave rather than the companion of man. Debarred by the strictest social restrictions from that education which would fit her to hold her rightful position as the helpmate of her husband—her will must ever bow down to that of her despotic lord and master, by whom she is regarded merely as a useful appendage, with no power allowed her to choose for herself in the various relations of life. The wife is not even permitted to eat at her husband's table, but waits on him with the servility of a slave whilst he enjoys his repast.

While yet a child she is disposed of in marriage by her parents, and it is no uncommon thing to see an infant of six months married to a man of forty or fifty years of age. Frequently before entering on her teens she becomes a wife, mother, and widow, when her situation is indeed deplorable, for not only is she prevented by caste rules from ever marrying again, but her person is rendered as unattractive as possible, and she is doomed to the performance of all the menial offices required in the family, and to a life of deprivation and hardship. This system is productive of the worst effects, leading to great immorality and crime. Criminal abortion and infanticide are common occurrences, the guilt of which they do not recognise.

At no period of her life is a woman in India ever independent. In youth she is subservient to her parents; when she attains maturity, to her husband; and at his death, to his relatives or to her sons.

Among the Malabars, girls are frequently dedicated to some god, and become attached to the temple over which he presides, which they help to support by money gained by prostitution, being at the mercy of the priests in particular and of the public in general. These are the only educated women, and they are instructed that they may be able to learn the lewd songs, sung in praise of their gods and goddesses.

Mussulmen teach their women to read, that they may study the Koran, but they are not taught to write.

It is pleasing to observe the change now coming over the country. Education is making rapid strides, girl-schools are being established in all parts of India, and I hope the day is not far distant when the women of India will share in the privileges of their more enlightened sisters of the West.

## APPENDIX.

*Ingredients used in making the Kayam Powder.*

ENGLISH NAMES.	TAMIL NAMES.	Palams.
Bishop's weed seed or Sison Acumi	Omum . . . . .	5
Piper longum . . . . .	Thippilee . . . . .	5
Piper dichotum . . . . .	Mody . . . . .	5
Piper nigrum . . . . .	Koolaga . . . . .	5
Turmeric or Cucuma longa . . . . .	Munja . . . . .	2
Dry ginger or Zingibus radix . . . . .	Sujee . . . . .	4
China root or smilax China . . . . .	Parungy Pullay . . . . .	3
Cubeibes or Cubeba . . . . .	Val Moolagoo . . . . .	3
Cumin seed . . . . .	Seeragum . . . . .	2
Cloves . . . . .	Laban gum or Cramboo . . . . .	1
Cinnamon . . . . .	Karoovapatay . . . . .	2
Nerium anti-dysenterium root . . . . .	Vappalay . . . . .	2
Cardamon seeds . . . . .	Galarisie . . . . .	1
Nutmeg . . . . .	Satekai or Jadikai . . . . .	$\frac{1}{2}$
Galls or Quercus infectoria . . . . .	Masekai . . . . .	$\frac{1}{2}$
Flacourtia catappracta . . . . .	Salisapatry . . . . .	2
Henbane seeds or Hyoscyamus niger . . . . .	Chorasanie onium . . . . .	2
Macardugua tomentosa . . . . .	Guntie paranghie . . . . .	1
Alpinia galanga . . . . .	Doomparastum . . . . .	2
Lesser Alpinia galanga . . . . .	Chittarithay . . . . .	1

These ingredients are separately parched and powdered, and then mixed together with one pound of palm sugar (sugar from the juice of the *Borassus flabelliformis*), and kept for use. It is said to be a powerful stimulant, and to keep cold from the system. It is administered in doses varying from one quarter to five palams.