Obstetrics Among the Aryan Hindoos
Submitted to the Faculty
of the
Woman’s Medical College of Pennsylvania
for the degree
of
Doctor of Medicine
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Class of 1886
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among the Aryan Hindoos

As the importance of obstetrics can be measured only by the value of life and health, and both being of paramount consequence it is deserving of most careful study. When we realize how difficult and vast the subject is, it is not surprising to find so many great minds thoroughly absorbed in its magnitude, from the time immemorial. Since our study naturally embraces the cause and effect, race, habits, climate[,] influences, and means of assisting Nature in her operations, we must not entirely overlook the history of past ages, and consider the superior minds, which labored, with marked success, in the same field of investigation, under the promptings of the same motives, as far back as 15 century B.C. They may enable us to the better appreciation of the science and pay due respect to the discoveries, theories & mode of application of remedies of minds of different nations at different times. I therefore need not apologize for choosing this subject.

The Hindoos divide the signs into those of conception & of pregnancy. "The signs of conception if carefully observed are: the women feels languid[,] fatigued, thirty with weakness of the thighs, irritable with throbbing in the vagina. Fecundation not uncommonly sets in with febrile reaction in which case high temperature, full[,] quick and bounding pulse, anoerexia[,] headache and thirst are very marked. Fever may set in with a sense of chilliness or may be nervous in character. Duration from a few
Signs of pregnancy are, cessation of the menses, head-ache, ensalisation, nausea, vomiting, variation in appetite, as a rule anorexia, general laxitude and "bearing down" pains. Nausea and Emeses are especially marked in the morning but may last all day. Later the cuticle around the nipple is deepened in color and raised which after simulates[sic] the appearence[sic] of "little nipples." The enlargement of the mammae is sudden and marked. Skin becomes tense over the glands, lacerates with edges torn quite ascunder[sic]. They have a thin watery but greasy secretion appearing at the experation[sic] of the third month. Vertigo, frequent micturition, change in disposition, irritability, peculiar and often unnatural cravings become prominent. There is another very important sign which the midwife should always look for. [T]his is the 'Divine Writing' which almost invariably means but one condition which is pregnancy. This extends from umbilicus to pubes. After five month[s] have elapsed, irritability of bladder and rectum and to some extent that of the mind are relieved. At this period a marked change is observed in the gait of the woman on account of the enlargement of the womb in the abdomen. About the seventh month her face presents a peculiar lustre which is termed the "lustre of pregnancy." When this is reversed, the condition is very much feared." On account of the religious regularity of habits, constipation is as unknown as it is injurious and if ever incurred, it is regarded as a disease, and every effort is made to banish it. Foetal movements may begin at any time after the fourth
month of pregnancy, but they generally begin about the 18th week and last throughout the entire period. They are always appreciated by the mother and often by the examiners hands and even eyes."

Ballotment is considered as a valuable sign of pregnancy and presence of living child in utero. No mention whatever is made in regards [to] the foetal pulse by the ancient authors while on the other hand mothers pulse is considered as one of the most reliable signs of pregnancy. To this the following characteristics are given[:] "It is full, strong, slow, normal, and nonirritable." Their accuracy in regards to it is as great as their dependance[sic] on it. I have known at least two native physicians positively decide pregnancy from the pulse alone while in one case of my personal acquaintance there was no other sign present.

The following good rules are laid down by Mann the great Aryan Legislator, Susruta and other physiologists. They say "transgressing them means committing sin."

"Hygiene of pregnancy. Woman[sic] from the time of conception, should be kept pure and happy. She should avoid sexual intercourse. She should not fast, retch, drag or lift heavy things, ride on horse back, sleep during the day and watch at night. She should avoid eating or drinking intemporately or indigestible foods, taking purgatives and emetics. She should avoid stretching[,,] violent exercise, grief, fear and anger. She must not be frightened, nor hit at even in joke, as it will either produce abortion or leave and unerasable mark on the person of the baby. She must not be blistered. She will avoid all disagreeable
sights and excitement and everything that will produce a shock. She should take no medicine if possible, nor without the advice of a skillful physician. She should not eat stale food or any thing that is warmed over. Her bed should be moderately soft, low, and comfortable. Her dress should never be heavy, tight or dragging. Let her wear white and a few ornaments. She should not take more than one full bath a day, which should be according to rules in the morning. She must avoid taking cold after it. She must take some exercise in order to store up strength for a safe and natural delivery." The whole house hold unites and cooperates to fulfil the laws prescribed and friends and relatives take a great interest in her happiness and well-being especially do they endeavour in case of a primipara. A primipara is invited to parties where young women[,] especially those in the similar condition, are invited. Garden parties, moonlight parties and candlelight parties have no end. Singing, playing, gentle dancing (strictly among women) constitute chief amusements. A variety of other amusements are invented. She is daily asked by friends & relatives as to her desire for certain things, food or drink. She at least receives three new light colored dresses, one at the end of the third month[,] one at the end of the fifth month and the third during the seventh month of pregnancy. "All these rules" says Susruta "must be observed in order to avoid any catastrophe and disaster such as making the foetus congenitally deaf, dumb, blind or deformed, marking its body as by a hit or blister (on mother) interfering with its perfect development as by bad living causing abortion as
by shocks, fear or grief. If the mother is emotional[,] selfish or generous so will be the child. Prayers should often be repeated by the woman. All these should be borne in mind in connection with the child’s futurity, for its physical, mental, moral and psychical cultures, nay its very existance is dependant on its environment and the mother’s condition."

A number of theories and long discussion exist on the development of ovum & foetus but as they will necessarily take up a great deal of time and space I am obliged to omit them entirely.

"Pathology. If there is any derangement of bile, wind, or phlegm, discomfort or sign of abortion, luicorrhia or hemorrhage a physician of the following description should be sent for at once. The physician should be of a good family of a healthy body, young (or old experienced one when a family physician) handsome, pure, vigorous, modest, discreet, patient, firm and intelligent. He should keep his nails short and body clean, should be well acquainted with the shastre (his profession)[,] should be studious and ready to do everything. He should be dignified in his department and correct in his manners and habits, gentle, kind[,] amiable[,] cheerful[,] collected and self confident. His language must be mild, candid and encouraging like that of a friend[’]s. His heart pure and charitable. He should possess a character for strict voracity and chastity. He should be a man of sense and benevolence, and his constant thought should be how he could do good. Such a person alone should be permitted to study this grand science of Medicine." He will note the following circumstances[:
observe the dress, manners and speech of the messenger[,] the planets & then his own impression. He will next examine the patient with five physical senses and two higher ones. I **Touch** will learn the condition of the skin, temperature, dryness, or moisture, roughness or smoothness, softness or hardness[,] regularity or irregularity of surface or of organs. II **Hearing** will detect the condition of the Lungs, Heart, respiration, voice and disease of wind. III **Vision** change in color[,] tongue, eyes, urine are learned by vision. IV **Taste** will decide the constituents of the urinary secretion as the red ants and found to be very fond of sugar. V **Smell** will teach us about the reaction of secretion & excretion and discharges and also of breath. VI **Speech** will find out more than any other yet mentioned if judiciously employed. History, sex, time of invasion, habits, cause, strength, appetite, degree of pain[,] evacuation &c. The physician will treat diseases here as in any other condition but more mildly & cautiously. Medicines and instruments should always be on hand and in best condition. Let the physician make a thorough examination, wait for a reasonable length of time, consult if necessary and use the seventh sense, which has not been mentioned, the **commonsense** or the inner sense[,] in diagnosis & decision on the kind of treatment he is to administer to his patient. Treat as early as possible while every condition is favorable. If there is pain, great turgescence and laceration of the mammae and abdomen[,] enunciations of Sesame oil with gentle friction should be applied before daily bath, and if necessary a comfortable bandage to the abdomen should be fitted
on. If insomnia exists give simple anodyne. For excessive emesis rest in bed and some thing to allay the irritability of stomack[sic]. Black mustard plaster may be applied over the area of the Stomack[sic]. Physician should have free access to his patient. Soothing drinks do good. If abortion is threatened following symptoms will present themselves, severe pain in the uterus, locis, groins, Bladder, Rectum with profuse white or bloody discharge from the womb. In such a case put the patient to bed & in perfect quiescence of body and mind with her hips raised above her head. Effusion of cold water or hot [-----] bath are useful. Ice should be given internally. Pieces of cloth dipped in cold water & laid over the abdomen will do good. Prayers should be repeated. If pain be very severe give asafoetida and prepared orris root in milk. Another way of preparing Asafoetida is, take a piece of the gum asafoet of about the size of a small pea. [P]op it well until it becomes 2-3 times its original size. [P]ulverise it. [M]ix with sugar and give in divided doses, within one hour. Repeat this until effect is produced. This is good for insomnia and Intestinal colic. Give opium in small doses or Canabus Indica very small doses. If there is general feebleness give "Laha" or Iron and other tonics and spirits. Give broth of wild animals." This last thing is not resorted to by the higher classes. "If hemorrhage is excessive, astringents application ice, hot water are good but never a [----------] here." Gentle friction over the abdomen will often stop. Tampon the vagina if these fail. For this purpose, use cotton with all its seeds removed and cleaned."
The shastras [advise] not to use any medicinal treatment during gestation "unless it is found to be the only savior of your patient. Hygienic treatment is best at all times."

"Duty of the patient. A patient rejecting a physician will be punished here and hereafter. The diseased person, if not too ill, should recollect carefully the directions of her physician and follow them with exactness, not being afraid of the result of medicine that is ordered. She will expect to be visited by her physician every morning. She is to occupy a clean & pure part of the house, convenient both to the patient & doctor. She must have confidence in her doctor in order to effect cure."

"Causes of abortion. Disease of the vagina, misplacement of the uterus, syphilis, gonorrhia[sic], excessive coitus, fever, shocks, and violent exercise. Age and criminal attempts are important." In spite of their limited knowledge of the physiological action of drug experience, had no doubt, befitted them to combat with diseases like syphilis & gonorrhia[sic], with some simple but valuable means, as injection of water with certain salts as copper sulph. Zinc sulph. Iron sulph or common salt, decoctions of certain bark & mercury[sic] with comparatively good success. They also recommend leeches for the early stages. "A primipara" says Dhanwantarie "should be instructed to think it very modest, to inform her elder women in the house, in case she should experience pain whether false or true, and that in spite of all desires to micturate or defecate, she must not go to the privy after that, as delivery[sic] may take place and prove false to both
the mother and the child. Such a sensation is caused by pressure of the womb on Bladder & Rectum. If pains subside after treatment for Intestinal colic they are false. The false pains are irregular and are reduced in intensity and frequency by time & treatment. They are "generally confined to the front. The true pains commence in the back and tranverse towards the front. They are regular and increase in intensity. While the pains are moderate and every thing else normal, the patient should walk about in the room, in order that the foetis may adopt itself to the parturient canal. But as the pains become more & more severe, the patient should be put to bed and kept quiet, calm, cheerful and composed. Her back should be supported by someone. Her mother or who ever takes her place should change her dress and rub her back with oil & bathe it in order to divert the attention of the suffering woman. She should be put to bed so that the membranes may not rupture permanently."

Preparation for lying-in. The preparations for lying-in consist of a comparatively dark room is to be put in order. The ancients say "a hut should be temporarily built for this purpose & is to be destroyed as soon as the lying-in period is over," but this is out of practice. Now every house has in it a room built for this purpose, with windows opening toward the East or South, as described by Charak, Susruta and others. "This should be kept clean, neat, dry, aerated and sunny." It is fixed with a cot, a bed, a fireplace, with a few medicines, baby clothes, scissors (dull) bobbin, oil of sesamum Indica, finely pulverized turmeric,
soft muslin napkins, both for the mother & the baby. Those for the mother are folded into many folds (about 7-10 in.) and between each two surfaces (excepting the two uppermost layers) are put very finely sifted wood ashes. These are believed to prevent putrefactive changes of the lochia. They are placed under the patient. Two bandages, one for the mother, which is from 4 to 6 yards long and the other one for the baby which is half its length. These should be made of soft and strong muslin. A little honey, a chamber vessel for the Placenta. "There should always be hot water in the house after the seventh month of pregnancy and religiously so if there is an suspicion or warning that the labor has commenced. If the labor is found to be in labor pains, a skillful midwife and two other elderly women with calm and non-excitable dispositions with short nails and clean persons should be sent for." These persons and a midwife are always engaged before hand. "These should not include mother of the parturient[?] woman. The midwife will make a thorough examination and decide the position of the patient according to the position of the foetus in utero. Thus she may put the woman on her back (which is by far the commonest position in India), semiprone, or even easy chair position. Let the midwife watch the progress of labor carefully and note the position of the foetus. One word to the midwife or the physician, Let the surgeon or obstetrician," says Mami, "bear in mind, that they are but second hands to Nature and that any effort on their part should be simply to assist Nature in her wise work and method of operation. She can do her work more simply and prudently than
they can with all their knowledge and interference. This is daily seen in the lower animal and for this reason never interfere unless nature calls for it. The patient should be told that her infant, like the extraneous substance must be expelled, and must assist by her methodical efforts. No one but the assistants and the elderly women in the house should know any thing about the condition of the woman. No one but the assistants should be allowed to enter to room. Men and children should be kept ignorant of it." The superstitious believers think it will increase the suffering on part of the patient to have men and children know of it.

**Accident of labor.** If the breach presents it will be born readily but the after coming of the head will call for some interference. If the foetus is transverse it must be verted. The lower part is to be pushed down and the upper upwards in order to bring about version. To accomplish this an assistant is required for external manipulations, while the midwife with her inside will turn the child. The hand outside will retain what is gained by the operator. If knee presents bring down the leg either one or both and it will simply be a breech presentation. If there is prolapsus of hands or feet and cannot be reduced[,] knife must be used, but this should seldom take place while the foetus is alive. If the child is dead and is not expelled craniotomy should be performed. Some time it is necessary to remove limbs and trunk in sections. There are certain conditions under which cutting into the uterus is necessary, through vagina, such as atresia and certain diseases of the cervix uteri. This is a dangerous operation being on an
internal organ, it is like working in darkness. After the contents are removed put sutures in and treat the case as you would a serious wound. If the pelvis is so deformed that the presenting part is beyond pelvic cavity this operation is justifiable. If the presenting part cannot descend and is beyond your reach and the pelvis so small that it would not admit of any operation through the vagina there is but one thing to be done. This is cutting into the abdomen and uterus. The woman is to be considered in great danger. The child may endanger its own life by changing its position. Her protector, whether father, mother, husband or king should be informed without delay of her condition. The surgeon should next to his operation formidable and perilous as it is by cutting into the lima alba after the Intestines are pushed out of the way, cutting the uterine walls in the same line, extracting the foetus and the placenta gently. After this wash the organ out next with certain waters as prescribed and close the wound with sutures of silver or gold wire or silk. [Put compress on. The wound must be fumigated three times daily for the first few days by burning the resins & other substances in a chaffing dish while the patient lies on an open cane cot. This is a formidable operation but has saved both the lives when they could not be saved for anything else."

The operation is fully described by Susruta. "These are three causes that may impede delivery. These are, deformity of the pelvis, preternatural presentation and deformity of the child’s head."

Order of presentation according to Charak, Vertex, Breach, Fooling, Back, Face, and knee. Each of these have a subdivision
which I can not here give on account [of] rarity of space. If the foetus is alive manipulation & prayers should be tried, before any operative measures."

After the foetus is expelled, wait for 1/2 an hour for the placenta, and if it is delayed too long wash your hands clean and introduce it in to the uterus. [C]arefully pass your finger all around against the walls of the uterus and gently remove all the membranes and the placenta.

Resuscitation. If the baby was asphyxiated and did cry or show any sign of life it must be attended at once while the assistant will attend to the woman as will be told afterwards. Gently rub the back of the child and stroke its chest. Remove all the mucus from its throat by your little finger. Hook out everything that may lodge in throat. Small pieces of clothes dipped in cold water should be laid over the chest suddenly and changed instantly by placing another one in its place. Move the arms of the child up and down or extend and flex them alternately. If this will not be sufficient[sic] place the child in warm water, place the placenta as far from it as the cord will allow you to do with safety. A few shreds of cotton should be next placed over the placenta at short distance and set fire to them. As they ignite, the blood will be warmed and remove the difficulty if it be caused by the infants being chilled after birth." I was informed of this by an elderly lady who herself tried this method in two instances of apparently dead babies, with decided success. One of these two infants died many years after that and the other is a man of
twentythree years of age.

"The umbilical cord should be tied with a string, six fingers breadth from the navel and devided[sic]. Wrap up the baby in warm clothes and put it in an oblong basket which is designed for it and attend to the woman.

After the woman is delivered of the placenta in whole, she should be made comfortable by placing her on her back if she is not so already. The womb should be pressed upon until bandage is applied. The Vagina and Labia should be well smeared with sesame oil and turmeric powder in warm milk and washed or injected thoroughly with hot water. Bandage is next to be applied. This makes the woman comfortable by causing pressure on parts that have been subjected to it and of which they are suddenly deprived. It also compresses the uterus. A napkin should be next placed under her and is to be removed from time to time. From this time the patient is to lie on her back for ten days. This period is sufficiently long enough to effect the involution of the uterus. If a woman neglects and does not follow these directions, she will suffer from subinvolution, pain in back, displacement and many such troubles probably all her life. Hot bath is given every morning after the sixth day after delivery and on every other day before that. Oleaginous friction massage and daily injections are given. The person of the patient must be kept very clean. Massage & injections are kept up for four or at least three months after parturition. The room should be thoroughly disinficted[sic] twice daily by burning certain resinous substances." There are some
special resins that are burned in a chaffing dish and the person of the patient is fumigated twice a day for the first 4 or 5 days, and once only for a few days after that. She lays on an open cane cot while she is being fumigated. Her food should be of simple and nutritious kind, consisting of wheat bread and a large number of other articles. Milk she can take plentifully. She can not take either water or milk that has not been boiled previously nor can she take them if they have been mixed with water unboiled in order too cool. "Water can be easily cooled in the Khujas in these days." The ancients strongly believed that "the atmosphere is densely populated by germs of infinite variety and minuteness and can never be seen by human eye. These can be destroyed by heat and fumes of certain resins hence the boiling process. Susruta says "give her the following mixture. Long pepper and its root, dry ginger, asafoetida, Iris Germanica, Amreona[?] Squamosa, Dolichos Senensis[?] and Cicir[?] Aurantiamarin as a decoction for the first few days." This formula is greatly modified and used with some more pleasant and palatable drugs. We can easily see why this modification was necessary. Milk tinctures and wines are given. I tried to procure some of the formulae of present days, but was disappointed not to get them in time. There are many things even the names of which I do not know that are used in puerperal fever &c. Female visitors may be allowed to see her after the first 48 hours, but they are not to ask her any questions for 4 or 5 days and only a few after that. They should never enter the room without washing their hands and feet in certain disinfectant waters
prepared for this purpose and sprinkle their clothes with them. They should stay at a distance, for they are not to touch the woman nor her baby. No one but the nurse and midwife and perhaps one other person are allowed to touch her or the new born for ten days, unless they are willing [to] go through the process of bathing, washing their hair and changing their clothes. She does not resume her full diet for nearly a week. On the eleventh day, she is bathed early in the morning, wrapped up in warm clothes and removed in a warm room, where she make[s] her more permanent abode (for four months). On the twelth[sic] day is the naming ceremony where friends and relatives are gathered to celebrate it. Musicians sing their gentle melodies from beginning up to this day. Male visitors can see the patient after four days."

"After the second (after parturition) the woman feels pain in her breast. These glands are exquisitely sensitive to touch and greatly enlarged. There is rise of tempature[sic], headache, and general discomfort for 24 hours after which milk appears." "After about two weeks she is not at all required to stay in bed, nor in one place." She may take sufficient exercise inside her own room by taking care of her child "but she is not to expose herself to change of weather or of clothes. She is not to sit up all day for many weeks yet (period of lying-in lasts for 40 days). She must not do any manual work, fetch or draw water or lift heavy things for three months. She should avoid fatigue and over exersion[sic] of every kind. These are almost always the causes of prolapsus uteri so should be born in mind. She must avoid intemperance in
eating and drinking and anger. Sexual intercourse is religiously prohibited for four months after delivery. Avoid excess of sour[,] pungent or sweet things." Gum Acasia is popped and coarsely powdered, a certain porpotion[ sic] of sugar is made into syrup and a large number of other drugs in fixed proportion such as Cinamoserum[?], Pimenta Caryophyllis, Myrastica[ sic], Cardamomum, Zingiber, Pepper Nigrum[?] &c. These are mixed together in the syrup and made into little balls of about the size of the English walnut and of these is taken every morning. Ginger cakes with number of ingredients that exceed some scores are taken every morning for two to three months. "Her dress should be warm and simple." The sleeves of her bodice which otherwise only reach her elbow are now made to reach her wrist. Unlike the usual custom she also wears a cap in order to protect her head from catching cold. These high nick, long sleeves and a cap are to be worn for four months. She must not leave her room without a shawl on nor walk about without shoes. She should not bathe her hands or feet in cold water. Change in food[,] dress and exercise (outdoor) must be a gradual one. She must nurse her own child. She must keep her breast clean and in good condition. "She must avoid anger, for anger has killed babies by poisoning through milk." After the cord has been tied and divided, the new-born should be smeared all over with sesame oil and gently rubbed. While doing this the nurse should examine the child's body and note that there is no imperfection any where. She must anoint her little finger and carefully pass it in the anus if she can. This will decide
that there is no imperforate anus. Let her next pass her another little finger under the tongue and see that the phrenum[?] does not extend too far. The[n] pass the same finger farther on and hook out all that may lodge in the throat. Examine other parts of the body at the same time. If there is imperforate anus or tongue tie, opening in the former & tearing in the latter cases is necessary, and should be resorted to at once. Finger nail as a rule will answer every purpose. This will take but a moment for an experienced and skillful nurse and require little skill at this period of life but will save many an hours of suffering. Give a brief bath to the child and dry it well especially under the arms, in the groin, neck[,], ears[,], between the toes and fingers because at these points, friction will give rise to eczema. Take a piece of muslin as large as the palm of the hand, burn a hole in it large enough to admit the cord through. "It is better the leave as much of the charred surface on as possible. The cord should be thoroughly cleaned and covered with the piece of cloth with a drop of oil on it. Put a small pad of soft muslin on it and bandage the abdomen. Bandage should not be too tight, not should it be loose enough to easily be displaced. A soft muslin napkin is next applied. The dress of the infant should be warm enough to retain the animal heat and long enough to cover its feet. The child is to be moved about gently and any exposure to loud noises is to be avoided. Avoid heavy dress. Baby is not to be suddenly awoke nor to be moved or handled roughly. It is not to be held sitting up long nor to be lifted up by the arms, as these careless manners
will make the child hump back or dislocate its limbs. A good healthy child ought to creep and walk before it is nine months old. Avoid exposure to cold[,] sun, wind and lightening[sic]. The bed of the child should be properly made. The newborn should be placed on its back until it is able to assume its own position. Soon after it is all dressed up, it should be given a little honey, about as much as would come on the tip of your index finger. This acts as a laxative and helps Nature to remove meconium, as mothers milk does not usually appear on the first day, especially in a [primipara]. Feed the baby after this. If mothers milk is not sufficient for the first few days goats or cow’s milk should be substituted for it. The former is better borne by the young infant that the latter. This should be boiled twice and skimmed after cooling the same each time before administration. The infant should be fed every hours for the first 2 months in small quantities, every two hours until it is six months old every three hours until it is weaned after which you will manage according to the circumstances. Child should not be weaned until it is a year old under ordinary conditions. Infant should be bathed every day in the morning[,] dressed[,] fed and put to bed in a cradle. The time of feeding should be regulated. The baby should be kept clean. It is very important that the milk the child drinks should be well boiled and skimmed at least once before administration. "The marked acidity of child’s stomach and the extreme heat of our summers, cause curdling of cream which the unboiled milk naturally possesses. This forms a precipitate which some times, indeed quite
commonly, becomes a source of great suffering on the part of the child. These cheasy[sic] masses are very small in the beginning of about the size of lima beans but soon become coated and constitute what we call "Watak" or Stomachic calculi. When small they are expelled during the act of Emesis which is so common with babies. When large as I said before they become the source of great alarm and uneasiness. They often reach the size of about one in. in diameter, and 2 to 4 in length. They occlude the oesophagus[sic] or pharynx and cause death by estrangulation. I have seen three children suffering from suffocation and one death after a number of attacks. These calculi when within reach are extracted with difficulty. They are hard, tough, long masses of creamy white color and broken with difficulty. If discovered early enough they can be broken up into smaller particles which can be vomited off. The tongue is coated white, coating being heavy and not easily removed. This symptom and vomiting with the cheasy[sic] masses as described above give rise to strong suspicion and a careful mother puts herself on her guard. For this the child is given to suck some alkalides several times a day, such as a little chalk (or some time in milk). Bismuth in very small doses and some other earthy matters. Emesis is induced by tickling the fauces and these rid the stomach of these masses. "The child should be fed with a pointed or conical spoon, made of gold or silver which is next to mothers nipple." Hindoos never use a bottle for feeding the baby. After the child has thus lived for six months on milk alone, it may take a small quantity of rice well boiled and made almost into
gruel, in milk with a little salt in it. Bread boiled in milk, barley or other digestible substance can be given. The diet of a child should be simple[,] nutritious and more or less liquid in consistancy. Honeys and sugars have done much harm. They are the origin of many infantile diseases so should be used with due caution. If the mother is angry, pregnant, fatigued, in grief, is feverished or anaemic[sic], has intemperate sexual appetite or has mammary disease, the milk is rendered unhealthy to the child so it should have a wet nurse or be fed on cows milk. If the child is sick, medicines are to be given to the mother or a nurse. But medicine should not be resorted to until the child [is] 13 years old if possible.

"Wet nurse.

The wet nurse should be of the same caste or class as the child. She should have a perfect body, good complexion and loving nature. She should be of medium height, middle age (not old) and in good health, devoid of chronic diseases and non-covetous. She should be of a good temper of a staid, cheerful disposition and have natural fondness for children. Her milk should be of good quality and flow easily. The nipple neither[sic] too short nor too long, nor too small with pendulous breasts. She should present a good family history. She should be clean in person & clothes and regular in diet and sleep. She should not nurse more than one child."

When it is found to be absolutely necessary to have a wet nurse these precautions are religiously observed and a careful
inquiry is made into her family history[,] health[,] occupation &c unless she is known to have nursed any children before. They are careful for they sincerely and correctly believe that feeding on her milk, the child will naturally inherit her good or bad quality, health or disease, say nothing of the influence she exerts on the baby both moral and intellectual by her association and be as they say "As is the soil and seed so will be the tree that beareth the fruit."

Disease of infancy, are too numerous to describe and treat here, but I will select a few only out of the long array as given by Chasak[?] which come directly under the care of the obstetrician.

Marasmus. causes[:] malnutrition[,] nursing a sick or pregnant woman, or one who has little milk[,] sore nipples or breasts. May be a defective intrauterine development or premature birth. Symptoms. the child is thin, peevish, sallow[,] restless and presenting appearance of [-------] age. Treatment Healthy mother’s milk or cow’s milk, a wet nurse’s milk most important. Cow’s milk is nutritious[,] sweet and easily digestible. Buffalo’s (Egyptian) milk is sweeter and heavier and adopted for older people. Goats milk is sweet and excellent especially for infants. Ewe’s milk is sallish and disagreeable, not easily digested. Mare’s milk is sallish[,] acidulous and easily digested. Ass’s milk if very fresh easily digestible and very good in extreme debility must be taken as soon as it is drawn. Out of these choose for your patient according to the case. All milk except human milk
(and I believe ass's milk for I have seen it prescribed in one case about 10 years ago) must be boiled before taken. Give plenty of milk massage[s] and daily baths. Carefully filtered or strained through a thick cloth, cow's urine can be used as a stimulant and food. Give [---] three times daily. If the bones of the child are soft and the fontinelles not closed in time give hartshorn in small quany[sic] twice daily or more. (This is the antler of the deer, incinorated[sic] in closed vessels. This burnt hartshorn leaves 57.5 per cent Phosphate of calcium) Nutritious foods must be combined with this.

**Diarrhia[sic]** caused by too often feeding and excess of cow's milk. Artificial feeding causes it. Treatment. Change in diet. Get a good wet nurse if mother is not able to nurse baby. If there is much pain give very minute quantity of Opium. Certain medicinal leaves are used for poulticing the abdomen. [Take] fresh ginger[,] pare it, crush or macerate it and squeeze out the juice and strain it. [M]ake syrup of a definite proportion of sugar, mix and boil them a little while. This makes very nice ginger syrup. Give a little of it to the baby from time to time. Sodium phosphates are given.

Persistant hiccough. Give 1/4 gr. of Kamarupa musk in milk 2-3 times a day. Nepal and other musk are not so good.

**Convulsions.** Asafoetida in milk, preparation of garlic baths and sudden dash of water. Seat worms. causes[::] malnutrition, too many sweet things, candies, sugars &c. Treatment. I can not give all the preparations but I will simply mention the names of some of
the drugs. Pormica granatum. *Garica papaya* Sulphur (most commonly given after Mangifera Indica) vernonias anthelmentica &c and caster oil which takes a high rank. Cathartics are recommended. For the unpleasant[sic] escape of gas, Cardamom with hash on burnt-on charcoal fire-pulverised[sic] & given in honey.

I have not mentioned those principles, theories and treatment, in this paper, which are entirely out of practice in India, though there are many valuable thing[s] with perhaps as many rediculous ones in our ancient Medical and surgical literature, (concurring obstetrics) that are not in practice. I have said too little to do justice to what is taught and practiced among the Brahmins but on account of the rarity of valuable time and space, I am obliged to say no more.

Anandibai Joshee.
Notations on the transcription of Anandibai Joshee's thesis:

This project was undertaken to assist researchers in reading Joshee's thesis, which is deteriorating.

Please note that Joshee used quotation marks rather haphazardly. I have tried to copy the physical placement of them for authenticity, without regard for contemporary rules of grammar which state that there must be quote marks at the beginning as well as the end of a direct quote.

Also please note that the correct spelling of all words (especially those terms medical) could not be obtained using contemporary medical dictionaries. Problem areas are marked with brackets with question marks or a dashed line, indicating the word was either probably misspelled by Joshee or illegible for transcription purposes. Most of her spelling mistakes were minor and thus remain as she wrote them, while others less obvious I have corrected to allow for easier reading and comprehension.

Overall, Dr. Joshee was haphazard about her use of capitalization and punctuation which I have attempted to correct. My corrections are also seen in brackets.

Carrie Wetherby
Archives and Special Collections on Women in Medicine
December 4, 1995