

**A SHORT MANUAL  
FOR  
MONTHLY NURSES**

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A short manual for monthly nurses by Charles J. Cullingworth

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## P R E F A C E.

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SOME regret having been expressed that, in my "Manual of Nursing," no mention is made of the subject of Obstetric Nursing, I have, at the request of my publishers, prepared the following brief work. It is to a considerable extent a reproduction (revised however and re-written throughout) of such of the chapters in a former work as have reference to this department, and will, I trust, prove useful to those monthly nurses who, already possessing an acquaintance with the details of ordinary nursing, desire some definite instructions with regard to their own special duties.

OXFORD ROAD, MANCHESTER,  
*January, 1884.*

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## CHAPTER I.

*The Early Signs of Pregnancy: Cessation of Menses—Morning Sickness—Changes in the Breasts—Enlargement of the Abdomen—Calculation of probable Date of Confinement—Quickening.*

THE first circumstance to make a woman suspect that she is pregnant is generally the non-appearance of her usual monthly discharge. This is called the cessation of the *menses*, or monthlies, and is one of the most constant signs of pregnancy. Cases do, indeed, now and then occur, in which, notwithstanding pregnancy, the customary flow takes place for the first few months just as usual, and in certain still rarer instances it has been known to appear regularly throughout the pregnancy.

On the other hand, its absence is by no means a sure indication of pregnancy, as it may be due to many other causes ; such, for example, as an attack of severe illness, a

condition of general weakness, or even strong emotional excitement.

The next symptom to attract attention is usually a feeling of sickness, often most distressing in the early morning, and sometimes accompanied with actual vomiting. This commences about the fourth or fifth week, and continues to the middle of pregnancy, when it generally ceases. Occasionally it lasts to the end of the pregnancy, while, on the other hand, in some women it is entirely absent throughout.

Shortly after pregnancy has commenced, a sensation of weight and fulness is felt in the breasts. A little later these organs enlarge, and the nipples become more prominent; the skin, too, just around the nipples becomes darker in colour, an alteration most marked in women of fair skin and light complexion. Of course these changes are most noticeable in women who are pregnant for the first time; for when they have once occurred, the breasts never quite resume their original appearance, so that subsequent changes are less observable. It

must be here noted, however, that the breasts may increase in size, and may even contain milk, without pregnancy; as, for example, in the case of certain diseases of the womb.

About the end of the third month the abdomen begins to enlarge, and continues to do so from that time forwards; by the end of the seventh month the hollow of the navel has generally disappeared. It need scarcely be said, however, that the abdomen may enlarge from many other causes, so that not one of the four signs above described affords, when taken alone, positive proof of pregnancy; although, when two or more of them are found to be present, there is good ground for a very strong suspicion. Whenever it is important that the question of pregnancy should be established beyond doubt, a doctor should be consulted.

The usual method of reckoning the probable date of confinement is to learn on what day the last monthly flow ceased, thence to count three months backwards (or nine months forwards) and add seven days. This is, in practice, the best plan