

Society, Dr. Merriman had published a paper entitled "Cases of Premature Labour Artificially Induced in Women with Distorted Pelves, to which are subjoined some observations on this Method of Practice." The author thought it significant that in thirty-two volumes of the "Transactions, embracing a period of forty years, there did not occur the history of a single case to illustrate this important rule of practice; while in these volumes there were reports of ten cases of Cæsarian operation. Of the safety, efficacy, and morality of inducing premature labour, in conformity with the rules inculcated by Mr. Merriman, the author thought most British and some foreign practitioners were convinced; but in respect to the induction of premature labour before the seventh month and in first pregnancies, to obviate the danger of craniotomy, and the fatal effects of the Cæsarian section, in cases of great distortion of the pelvis, little had been said by writers on midwifery. To justify the practice, which the author regarded as equally safe, efficacious and moral, before, as after the seventh month of atero-gestation, and in a first as in any subsequent pregnancy, he submitted the history of a successful case, which was attended with peculiar complications, and formidable difficulties.

In October, 1819, with Mr. Booth, of Queen-street, Westminster, he saw Mrs. S——, who had been in labour forty-eight hours, and whose pelvis was distorted in the highest degree from *mollities ossium*. After perforating the head, which had not entered the brim of the pelvis, and by tearing in pieces the bones with the crotchet, delivery was accomplished after two hour's violent exertion. The partially dilated state of the os uteri greatly increased the difficulty and danger of the operation. The patient recovered without any unfavorable symptom. In December, 1852, the author learnt from Mr. Booth that the patient was again pregnant; and in the fifth month, some diagnostic symptoms of pregnancy being absent, any interference was postponed for another month. In January 1853, the movements of the fetus could be distinctly felt, and the necessity for immediately attempting to induce premature labour was obvious and urgent. The great distortion of the pelvis (the tuberosities of the ischia were almost in contact, with the sacrum projected forward nearly to touch the front of the pelvis) presented unusual difficulties even in reaching the os uteri for the purpose of introducing the stiletted catheter to puncture the membranes. After a time, the fore and middle fingers of the left hand were passed into the vagina and the anterior lip of the os uteri was touched with the tip of the fore-finger; the instrument was then guided into the cavity of the uterus, and the membranes punctured. The liquor amni continued to flow till the morning of Friday, the 7th of January, when the labour pains come on. At two p.m. the os uteri was so much dilated that the points of the two fingers could be introduced, and the nature of the presentation ascertained. It was not the head, but whether shoulders or nates could not be determined. At seven p.m. the right hand was hanging out of the external parts, and the shoulders and thorax had sunk deeper into the pelvis. On a careful examination, it was found that the tuberosities of the ischia had been pressed considerably apart, the short diameter of the outlet had thus increased; and there was little doubt that the bones at the brim had also yielded somewhat to the pressure. The shoulder being brought down as much as possible, the viscera of the thorax were removed by the crotchet; and after fixing its point in the spine as near as possible to the pelvis, after strong traction, the nates and lower extremities were drawn through, and the other superior extremity soon followed. But little difficulty was experienced in crushing or extracting the head. The placenta soon followed. Three weeks after the delivery, the author received a satisfactory communication from Mr. Booth, stating that the patient had progressed very favourably.

[Mr. Hodgson, the president, enquired what was the smallest diameter of the pelvis which would admit of the removal of the fetus piecemeal?]

Dr. Leo said that his object in narrating the case was to bring under the