

THE HYGIENE OF CHILDBEARING

toms, therefore, in a case where there has been more or less albumen present, should be regarded as a sign of the utmost importance, and no time should be lost in securing medical aid.

The Real Danger.—It is well to bear in mind that it is not the loss of albumen which is the serious feature of these cases. Even some physicians fail to grasp this idea. To cut albuminous foods out of the patient's diet in the hope of reducing the amount of albumen in the urine, fails to touch the real cause of the trouble. It is not what she is losing that we have to fear; the danger comes from what she is *not* losing. In other words the albumen lost is comparatively unimportant; but the poisonous wastes which she retains in her system are capable of destroying her life.

SIGNS OF LABOR

Sinking.—Prospective mothers as well as doctors would be glad if some way could be found of foretelling the exact date when delivery may be expected. But no such way has ever been found and probably never will be. In most cases it is not possible to tell the exact time of labor until it actually sets in. In some cases the sign known as "sinking" gives a vague warning two or three days in advance. Where this sign is well-marked the pregnant uterus sinks decidedly lower, and the patient experiences a sense of relief, because the stomach is no longer crowded up against the heart and lungs. At the same time the shape of the abdomen is changed so that