

the os uteri dilating gradually and well. There was no unusual tediousness, and the patient appeared to bear her pains with more than ordinary patience and with very little complaint of suffering. About 5 a.m., the perinæum came to be pressed upon by the head, and its distention was most regular and gradual. The pains at this period of the labor were not at all too strong or too long continued, a good interval taking place between them.

The perinæum had become so much stretched as to admit of the protrusion of a part of the head through the external orifice, and another pain or two seemed all that was needed to finish the labor. I advised the patient to keep as still, and bear down as gently as possible when the pains came on. Just as I had done so, she said it was coming, but that she felt unable to lay hold of the sheet with her hands, and in an instant, without further warning, she was seized with a most violent convulsion. Her body was thrown from the front to the back of the bed, while the child (which was born alive) was thrust suddenly and with great force through the vulva, lacerating the perinæum considerably, but fortunately not so as to injure the sphincter of the bowel.

There was in this case no evidence whatever of active cerebral congestion prior to the supervention of the fit. Contrariwise, the patient's whole aspect indicated a state of general debility. The convulsion appeared to be due solely to the suffering caused by the pain during which it took place.

On the cessation of the convulsion, I administered a powder containing $1\frac{1}{2}$ grs. of opium, which I happened to have by me, and having attended to the delivery of the placenta and the application of the bandage, sent at once for some chloral.

Before the messenger returned, in about thirty minutes after the first fit, she had a second, and in twenty minutes more she was evidently about to have a third, when I gave her a dose of chloral—10 grs.—in sweetened water. In a very short time she became quite calm, and becoming, in half or three quarters of an hour, somewhat restless, I repeated the dose. She fell asleep and slept for several hours, and had no return whatever of the convulsions. I may add, that each fit lasted about five minutes, and that as the bowels had been moved early in the labor, there seemed no necessity for troubling her either with an enema or a purgative.