

Clinical observation apparently shows that both hydramnios and twin pregnancies predispose to excessive vomiting, though whether this is the result of the mere overdistention of the uterus, or whether it is associated with some toxæmic condition has not yet been demonstrated.

Hydatidiform mole has a similar effect, and Bué has reported three cases in which the vomiting ceased immediately after the evacuation of the mole, and has collected a large number of similar cases from the literature. Likewise, in one of my cases the spontaneous expulsion of the mole prevented the induction of abortion for the relief of vomiting. But in this condition, as well as in twin pregnancy and hydramnios, the exact interpretation of the effect of the abnormality is not easy; as it is possible, on the one hand, that the vomiting may be merely the result of over-distension of the uterus, while on the other, it may quite as readily be attributed to a toxæmic condition, which may be due to abnormal metabolism on the part of the mother fœtus, or to the formation of syncytiotoxins resulting from the presence of unusually large amounts of fœtal elements in the maternal blood.

Chorio-epithelioma has likewise been invoked as a cause of the condition by Davis and Harris, although in their case it is questionable whether the vomiting was due to the presence of fœtal tissues in the growth itself, or merely to the mechanical action of the metastases which were found in the brain at autopsy.

2. *Neurotic Vomiting*.—Although the effect of pregnancy upon the mental, moral, and nervous equilibrium had long been recognized, and Anquetin, Tisserand, Duncan, Rosenthal, Ahlfeld, and others had pointed out that many cases of severe vomiting were neurotic or hysterical in origin, it was nevertheless not until Kaltenbach read his paper before the Berlin Obstetrical Society in 1890, that general attention was directed to this phase of the subject.

On that occasion he pointed out the necessity for narrowing the conception of the pernicious vomiting of pregnancy and confining it strictly to those cases in which there was no disease of other organs or of the generative tract to which it might be attributed.

In this restricted sense, he held that the severe cases of hyperemesis were the result of an abnormal condition of the nervous system by which the reflex irritability was heightened and the reflex control lessened. This being the case, it could readily be understood how the irritation might be increased by diseased conditions on the part of the generative tract on the one hand or of the stomach on the other. Accordingly, he concluded that the vast majority of cases of vomiting of pregnancy were due to a neurosis, more or less allied to hysteria; although he was compelled to admit that many of the patients presented no evident manifestations of the latter condition.