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## MISSED ABORTION.

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Before I enter upon the material which explains my motive in bringing this paper before you, I think it would be well to explain definitely what is meant by the term *missed abortion*, and show by analogy how it is related to, and how it differs from, some other obstetric conditions. By missed abortion is understood an arrest of pregnancy in the early months of gestation. Abortion is threatened. The foetus dies, but is not expelled as is usual in cases of abortion. Milk sometimes appears in the breasts. Hæmorrhage may occur from the uterus, or may not. If the ovuline membranes remain entire, the process undergone by the uterine contents is generally that of *mummification*—a peculiar form of decomposition, *but not putrefaction*. It is only when germs are admitted—and generally when rupture of the membranes and escape of the liquor amnii has taken place—that putrefaction and the more or less complete dissolution of the ovum ensue. In such cases we will observe that the woman, as she advances in the apparent condition of pregnancy, gradually gets smaller instead of larger. She may or may not have a dark, non-offensive, muddy discharge, which may be constant or intermittent in character. Her general health is not as good as usual; her digestive system is not working as it should; the