

rus" in 1774, and founded physiological midwifery, produced some modification in the opposite direction, and the opinion brought about through his influence may be indicated by a quotation from his disciple Denman. "It has long been established, in this country, that the use of instruments of any kind ought not to be allowed in the practice of midwifery, from any motives of *eligibility*. . . . Whoever will give himself time to consider the possible mistakes and want of skill in younger practitioners, which I fear many of us recollect; the instances of presumption in those who, by experience, have acquired dexterity, and the accidents which under certain circumstances seem scarcely to be avoided, will be strongly impressed with a sense of the propriety of this rule."

This is also the position taken up by Collins, from whose work I have already quoted. There can be little doubt, however, that under these rules the interests of the mothers were not conserved. The practice was to delay too long during the second stage of labour, and this brought about those terrible injuries from sloughing, leading to the formation of fistulæ between the vagina and the bladder, and between the vagina and rectum, which produced such a frightful amount of suffering among women at the most vigorous and useful period of their lives. Collins speaks of using the midwifery forceps only once in 608 cases, but he gives concisely the facts of many cases of cruelly prolonged childbirth, of which the following are fairly typical examples :

No. 504. Was brought to hospital from the country; reported to have been five days in labour; it was her first child; it was dead and the head firmly fixed in the pelvis. She was much exhausted; pulse 110; tongue parched. "The head was immediately lessened," and delivery effected with the crotchet. She sank on the ninth day from admission.

No. 555. Was sixty hours in labour of her first child. The pelvis was defective, and there had been no advance for the last twelve hours, the child's death having been ascertained by the stethoscope some hours previous; the head was lessened and delivery thus completed.

No. 608. The labour pains were very tardy and feeble, producing irritation without causing any dilatation of the mouth of the womb. In this state she remained for thirty hours, after which opiates were given three times at considerable intervals, each time with benefit, and at the expiration of fifty-three hours she was delivered naturally of a still-born child.

We need not go abroad to seek the advice of the masters of the obstetric art during this period, and I need not further multiply