

he based his practice of entirely separating the placenta, having observed that, in many cases in which the after-birth had been expelled before the child, the hæmorrhage had ceased. The fact of the cessation of the hæmorrhage, when this occurs, is not doubted; but Simpson's explanation is contested by most modern writers, prominent among whom is Dr. Barnes, who has devoted much study to the elucidation of the subject. He points out that the stoppage of the hæmorrhage is not due to the separation of the placenta, but to the preceding or accompanying contraction of the uterus, which seals up the bleeding vessels, just as it does in other forms of hæmorrhage. The site of the loss was actually demonstrated by the late Dr. Mackenzie in a series of experiments, in which he "partially detached the placenta in pregnant bitches, and found that the blood flowed from the walls of the uterus, and not from the detached surface of the placenta. The arrangement of the large venous sinuses, opening, as they do, on the uterine mucous membrane, favors the escape of blood when they are torn across; and it is from them, possibly to some extent also from the uterine arteries, that the blood comes, just as in post-partum hæmorrhage, when the whole, instead of a part, of a placental site is bared."

The *cause* of the hæmorrhage is viewed differently by different authorities. It is contended by some that it is due to a loss of proper relation between the placenta and the uterus where it is attached. Dr. Mathews Duncan, however, maintains that the hæmorrhages are accidental, being due to similar causes to those which give rise to hæmorrhages when the placenta is normally placed; the abnormal situation of the placenta rendering the causes more apt to operate.

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