

My patient, aged 28, the wife of a well-to-do farmer, in October 1865 bore a healthy child, which she suckled till the following July. In August she menstruated, and then became pregnant again. The usual symptoms of pregnancy were present, and all went well with her till January of this year, when a slight hæmorrhage commenced, and, notwithstanding appropriate treatment, persisted for more than a month. From the middle of February till the middle of April, she was pretty well. Occasionally a slight sign appeared, but not enough to call for more than a few hours' rest upon the sofa. She felt the movements of the child, frequent, but very weak. Her arrangements were accordingly made for lying in during the month of May.

On April 20th, while spending the evening from home, she experienced a sudden and severe hæmorrhage, with slight uterine pains. The pains subsided, but the hæmorrhage continued more or less until the morning of the 3rd of May, when active labour appeared to be coming on, and a message was sent to me to hold myself disengaged.

Six hours later, I was summoned. The pains had steadily increased, accompanied by considerable but not alarming hæmorrhage; and, just before my arrival, two large masses of an hydatidiform growth, together filling a chamber-pot, had been passed. The pains continued; and half an hour later, a third portion, equal in volume to either of the others, was voided; after which the pains subsided, and the uterus was felt hard and contracted, as after natural labour. Altogether a considerable quantity of blood lost, and my patient was very faint; but at the expiration of an hour, I was able to leave her in as good condition as that of woman recently delivered of a child, with after-pains and lochia fully established.

The sequel was most satisfactory. She went through the usual routine of a lying in. On the third day, there was a profuse secretion of milk; and the involution of the uterus subsequently proceeded as after childbirth.

I made a careful examination of the substance expelled. It filled a chamber-pot and a half. So far as I could ascertain, there was little or no fluid discharged from the uterus. I could find nothing representing foetus or placenta; but several large masses of solid half-organised coagulum, and pieces of tough white membrane. The bulk of the mass was made up of transparent vesicles, varying in size from one-eighth of an inch to an inch and a half in diameter; and these were arranged in lines and clusters, like branches of grapes, and were attached to the pieces of membrane and coagula.

I need hardly say that I was unprepared for the advent of such a