

was too kind to say stepmother) to illuse my darlings—our darlings; promise, for my sake, Charles." The scene was harrowing, and I gave way under it. I learned that she had already borne three children, then living, under circumstances of extreme peril, and that her medical attendant had assured them both, that if subjected to the same ordeal again, it was impossible she should survive. I saw and verified a letter from her former attendant, in which he urged that abortion was the sole means of averting otherwise inevitable death. The writer was a man of considerable wealth, of a social standing far above any that I have ever attained, and of great professional repute; but all these are not absolute proof of real ability. Great men are not always wise. I was not satisfied of the absolute necessity of the act, and yet I assumed the responsibility—undertook and effected abortion. "*Mea culpa*." I was wrong, very wrong; responsibility cannot be delegated. Upon a subsequent occasion, when I came to know the lady better, I cheered her spirits, raised her hopes, and safely delivered her at term of a living child, with much less difficulty, danger or suffering than I have encountered in scores of cases.

I proceed now to speak of a different class of cases. I have sought for information about cases of this kind, but my resources in books being very limited, I have not found it; but I am strongly impressed that they are not very infrequent. I lay before you two cases, one successful, the other the reverse. I think they are worth your bearing in mind. Neither of these cases were actually under my care, though I write "*Ayant connaissance de cause*." A lady living a happy life with her husband, had one grief—she was childless. Eleven different times, she had conceived and carried her child about seven months, when she was seized with a rigor and convulsive movements in the foetus, and in a few weeks a putrid child was cast off. Upon the last occasion, minute microscopic examination was made, and the umbilical cord was found in a state of fatty degeneration. Assuming this to be the cause of the death of the child and consequent abortion, it was determined to anticipate her next annual abortion by effecting her delivery by professional abortion, before the death of the child should occur. It was effected, and "she that was barren was made to sing with joy." I have reason to think the child is still alive.

In the other case, the woman had, in a similar manner, aborted no less than fifteen times! An attempt was then made to follow in the track indicated by the preceding case. The child was born alive, but only survived an hour or so. Perhaps the proper time was not hit with sufficient exactitude; perhaps the child was not viable, or it may not have been attended with sufficient promptitude and skilful care, I know not, but I am of opinion that in cases of constantly recurring abortion at or about the seventh month, careful examination should be made of the condition of the cord, and if the appearances were such as I have described, I should (notwithstanding the failure in this last case) attempt to save the child.

With respect to accidental abortion, I have but very little to say; in fact I shall only offer one remark, and that with diffidence, and do not presume to speak authoritatively (and of course I speak of prophylactic treatment only). I should endeavor to ascertain whether the case was traumatic, or, what I may term pathological; and I place much less reliance upon the absolute rest usually enjoined and rely much more on the sustained continuous action of opium than is usually done. I believe the confining of a woman to bed for weeks (and I have known months ordered) leads to an accumulation of nervous, morbid vitality (irritability), that defeats the object sought to be attained.

Before proceeding to the 3rd class, "Felonious Abortion," I cannot refrain from commenting upon some extraordinary statements sworn to in a recent "murder trial" in this Province, that "Aloes has no tendency to produce abortion!" I should like to know upon what ground the gentleman has come to a conclusion, in direct opposition (as I believe) to the universal judgment of the profession. His next assertion is still more startling: "Not a medical man under the sun can produce abortion with safety." With due emphasis upon the qualification (with safety), I concede, this proposition; but he goes on to say, "In nine cases out of ten, the medicine will kill the woman!" "and if instruments were used, the most disastrous results would follow." I unhesitatingly affirm that I know this to be an exaggeration. Since I have been in Windsor, I have, in consultation, attended four cases of abortion, which I have a moral certainty were felonious. One escaped scot free; two narrowly escaped with their lives, and retributive death carried off the