

Those of us who are young look to the older and more mature for "pointers," so to speak, to help us through some of the more obscure and intricate labyrinths of our professional career.

The interchanging of ideas and experiences upon these complicated questions, the rubbing of intellect against intellect in earnest debate, must surely have the effect, like silver coins when rubbed together, of clearing away the rust and dross and exhibiting the shining metal of truth to our mutual good.

This subject of puerperal eclampsia especially appeals to me, for my last experience was a rather bitter one, and deprived a fond husband for the *second* time, of a loving wife. Since my obstetric practice began, twelve years ago, it has been my misfortune to lose two patients during the pangs of childbirth, one from post-partum hæmorrhage and the other from puerperal eclampsia, and by a strange fatality both belonged to the same husband and each in turn left him with a helpless child to nurse.

Puerperal eclampsia, then, may be truly said to be one of the most sudden and serious conditions which complicate pregnancy and the early puerperium.

The nomenclature is perhaps a little misleading as by it one would conclude that the seizure, the bursting, or shining forth, as the word, derived from the Greek, would imply, was confined to that period which is usually considered to begin after the child is born and the third stage of labor completed, whereas puerperal eclampsia so-called, may take place *any time*, after the early months of pregnancy, until three or four days of the puerperal period have elapsed.

Hence we may be confronted with the perplexing malady either *before, during, or after* labor.

One author defines puerperal eclampsia as a symptomatic disorder characterized by convulsive or epileptiform seizures that suddenly come on *prior to, during, or after* labor.

This definition gives us no hint as to its cause, although various attempts have been made among the observers of half a century ago and earlier to assign it to a derangement of the nervous system in some way related to epilepsy.

A little later it was observed that eclampsia patients exhibited an excessive amount of albumen in their urine, and this naturally directed attention to the kidneys as possibly the seat of the disease.

Uræmia was known to be a disease due to derangement of the kidneys, and as these two conditions exhibited so many symptoms in