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CYSTIC DEGENERATION OF THE VILLI OF THE CHORION AND ITS RELATION TO CHORION EPITHELIOMA.*

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This condition is usually known as Hydatid Mole, Hydatidiform Mole or Cystic Mole. Among the earlier writers very extraordinary theories were advanced to explain the probable cause of the condition. The earliest I can find any record of is by Amidi early in the sixth century. For several years the prevalent belief was that each vesicle contained a living embryo as is shown by the interesting quotation of Priestley¹, by Ambroise Pare, in which he refers to the Countess Margaret having brought forth at one birth 365 infants, whereof 182 were said to be males, 182 females and the odd one a hermaphrodite; and it was not until early in the seventeenth century that it was considered to be due to some disease of the ovum. No more definite explanation for the condition was suggested until the beginning of the present century, and then it was claimed that the vesicular condition was due to the presence of the echinococcus. Velpeau² was the first to discover that the cysts were simply the distended villi of the chorion. This was confirmed by microscopic examination by Prof. Robin³, which shewed that the hydatidiform vesicles had all the anatomical characteristics of the walls of the villi of the chorion.

Many attempts have been made to explain the cause of this cystic degeneration, such as hypertrophy, oedema, disease of the blood, vessels, disease of the lymphatics and degeneration of

*Read before the Ontario Medical Association, June, 1904.