

of the thermometer moves about loosely without coming thoroughly in contact with the tissues. This is specially apt to occur in emaciated people. On the other hand, if placed quite on the right or left side, the distal end of the thermometer becomes depressed, thus rendering the reading of it difficult—nay, sometimes the column of mercury divides when part gravitates down the tube, giving a fictitious result. If, on the other hand, the patient be placed neither completely on the back nor side, but in a medium position, these objections are obviated; for the parts then fall naturally together, no muscular effort being required to retain the thermometer. Care should be taken that the patient has been previously covered up, and that the axilla has not been exposed; otherwise a difference of  $2^{\circ}$  or  $3^{\circ}$  Fah. may result. It is, therefore, better, if the patient has been lying on one side, to turn him diagonally on the other, and to use the axilla which was previously most dependent. Care should be taken that the thermometer be in complete contact with the skin, and that no clothes are in the way to separate it from the surface of the body. All these precautions being observed, it is better to allow the thermometer to remain in the axilla at least five minutes. The temperature should be taken twice in the day—at 8 a.m. and 8 p.m. If only one observation can be made in the day, the evening must be chosen, for often the temperature is normal in the morning, but very considerably elevated at night.

It is better to use a thermometer constructed for the purpose. Those of the ordinary make are often untrue, and are always difficult of application. Trustworthy and suitable thermometers can be obtained of Mr. Casilla, of Hatton-garden.

## Midwifery and Diseases of Women and Children.

### REMARKABLE CASE OF "MISSED LABOUR":

#### RETENTION OF A FŒTUS IN THE ABDOMEN FORTY-THREE YEARS.

By R. W. WATKINS, F.R.C.S., Towcester.

On January 10th, 1866, I visited, by request, Elizabeth Jones, aged seventy-four, widow of William Jones, a small village shopkeeper at Stoke Bruerne, Northamptonshire. She gave me the following history, which I will narrate as nearly as possible in her own words.

About forty years ago, she was in labour with her second child. Her first, born two years previously, having had water in the head, had survived its birth only a few years. The labour being very lingering, they had sent for my late father, who had attended her, and remained with her