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Original Communications.

OBSTETRICAL MEMORANDA.

CASE OF INTERSTITIAL FŒTATION.

By Carr Holstok Roberts, L.R.C.P.L., M.R.C.S. Eng., L.S.A., M.B., M.A.

The rarity of these cases induces me to ask you to give me a niche in your columns for a short description of this one :

On Sunday evening, the 1st inst., at half-past ten, I was requested by the husband of the patient to come and see his wife ; he stated that they had gone to bed as usual and had been to sleep, when his wife woke him, and said that she had been woken by " pains in the stomach, and could not get rid of them, nor go to sleep again." He had given her some brandy, but without any good effect.

I found her in bed ; a tall, stout woman, aged 32, complaining of pain in the abdomen (which, however, was not swollen or tender, nor was the pain aggravated by pressure), of sickness, and slight diarrhoea, which she attributed to her having taken Pil. Cochia pills. The vomit looked only like semi-digested food, and the diarrhoea was only like the loose motion that would be produced by a purgative ; her skin was cool and moist, her pulse good, and her respiration and temperature both normal. She was perfectly conscious, quite calm and collected, and there was nothing what-

ever to indicate such a sudden and fatal termination as took place. I elicited that she had missed two periods. She had had two (only) children, both born at the full period, and both living. The youngest, being fourteen months old, had been weaned about two months. She had never had a miscarriage, but thinking it most probable that such was the nature of this illness, I gave her opium, ammonia, and chloric ether, and ordered hot fomentations, and linseed poultices to the abdomen, with a little brandy at intervals, and left instructions to be sent for if necessary. I was not, however, called again until 8 a.m. the following morning, as she had suddenly become much worse. I then found her in a state of collapse, and evidently dying, but perfectly conscious, and complaining of a great desire to pass water. She had, however, done so during the night, and the bowels had been once relieved, but she was not purged. I passed a catheter, but the bladder was empty. She became rapidly worse (there had been no more vomiting), but remained perfectly conscious until half-past ten, when she expired. I should have said that her previous health history was very good.

Autopsy.—There were no external marks of violence: the body was, for a woman of her age, very fat, the abdominal cavity was full of clots and bloody liquid—the clots weighed very nearly six pounds, and the fluid measured five pints. Floating amongst this was a fetus (apparently