of regulating the claw with the finger or thumb, so as to keep it steady on the tooth. You can also slip the claw readily, and you may, for the extraction of the *dentes sapientiæ*, throw the claw before the fulcrum and fix it by the neck, which you will find at the end of the stem. As with you, however, the forceps are what we generally use, and the lever, which is a most invaluable tool to us. Believe me, very sincerely yours,
ROBERT NASMYTH.

A REMARKABLE UTERINE TUMOR.

BY JOS. PAINCHAUD, M.D., OF QUEBEC.

[Communicated for the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal.]

Mrs. B., aged 55, of a sanguineous temperament, had been twice married. Fifteen months after the first marriage she gave birth to a living female child, and lived with her first husband eleven years without any other uterine gestation, or any alteration in her catamenial discharges.

Having become a widow at the age of 38, she married again, enjoyed good health, and a few months after this second marriage all the indications of impregnation manifested themselves; and upon consulting her attending physician, no doubt remained of her pregnancy. At the ninth month symptoms of approaching labor induced her to send for her medical attendant, who upon visiting her did not hesitate to pronounce her to be in labor, and for several days in vain waited for an augmentation of pains, with the consequence, dilatation of the os uteri. No disposition to this change manifesting itself, and the other indications gradually disappearing, she was left under the impression that not more than a few days would elapse without the recurrence of more effectual labor pains; instead of which, for nine months she enjoyed her ordinary health, retaining, however, her corpulency. At this period, and at two ensuing periods of nine months each, the same symptoms presented themselves, with a similar result, with the exception of considerable flooding at the two last false attacks of labor. Since then, up to this time, a space of about seventeen years, every three or four months she became subject to less or more severe attacks of hæmorrhage from the uterus. With this exception, however, her health was good, and enabled her to attend to her family duties.

On the 22d of September, 1838, so severe an attack of hæmorrhage came on, as was fatal to her on the 26th following. On the next day, Dr. Painchaud, whose patient she had been, having sent a general invitation to his medical friends of the place, to be present at the examination of the body, the following gentlemen attended, viz., Drs. Couillard, Morrin, Blanchet, Rowley, Douglass, Snell, Neault, Robitaille and Trémont, with several students. Dr. Trémont having been requested, by Dr. Painchaud, to examine the body, he did so, and gave the following account.

The abdominal tumor being unusually large, both from the great obesity of the body and the contents of the abdomen, it was measured, and found to be forty-five inches from one crista ilii to the other, and

thirty-one inches from the scrobiculus cordis to the pubis. There was perceived distinctly through the abdominal parietes, besides the large uterine tumor, a smaller one on its superior aspect, of about the size of a man's fist. On dissecting the parietes of the abdomen, an enormous quantity of adipose matter was found throughout the cellular substance. A ventral hernia, three inches below the umbilicus, was discovered, filled by a portion of omentum, also loaded with fat, and which was irreducible, without an opening being made within the edge of the rupture. The omentum having been turned up, the tumor was found to be uterine. On the external surface of the uterus, were seen, through its thin serous covering, many very large and empty veins, which upon removal of the uterus, were found to extend to the situation of the os tinæ; and from which, most probably, flowed the blood which finally proved fatal. The appendages of the uterus were in no manner unhealthy. After dissecting the uterus from its connections, an incision was made across the upper part of the vagina, and the uterine tumor and appendages were removed. The mass weighed fifteen pounds, and measured, in its smallest circumference, twenty-five inches, and thirty-two inches in its largest, was extremely firm, and of an oval form. Towards the fundus were three distinct tumors, one of which corresponded to that remarked through the abdominal parietes; the others were smaller, and more posteriorly situated, but all contained within the uterine cavity. The most minute external examination could not detect the least vestige of the os tinæ. The uterine walls were then laid open longitudinally, and the contents found to be closely adherent and organized with them. Some dissection laterally proved them to be not above the twelfth of an inch in thickness, except in the situation of the os tinæ, where they were much more attenuated, but no distinct opening could be discovered. In consequence of the contents of the uterus being so closely adherent to its substance, the external incision was continued perpendicularly through the mass, so as to divide it into two halves. The substance within was, generally, of nearly cartilaginous hardness, and of a yellowish color. A number of small bones, of various size and forms, were found imbedded in the solid mass of the tumor; none of these, however, approached to the shape of any of the bones of the human skeleton, though in their intimate structure and composition they were essentially osseous. At about one third downwards from the fundus, and about an inch from the surface, a cavity was found containing several ounces of a tarry substance, in every respect resembling meconium. Immediately above this, was the situation of the distinct elevation already noticed. It was found to be principally osseous, and to be immediately covered by the uterine parietes, to which it was also very closely adherent. Its shape and size somewhat resembled a fetal head, of about six months growth. By means of a saw it was divided longitudinally, and was found to be a bony case, composed of many portions, covering a semi-cartilaginous substance, not unlike that which formed the principal bulk of the tumor. The two other distinct elevations were also examined, and found to resemble the body of the tumor.

Quebec, October, 1838.

It was the opinion of each of the medical gentlemen attending at this post-mortem examination, that the contents of the uterus were the relics of impregnation, or the *débris* of once organized substance, having the form and disposition to be a fœtus.

DR. ALCOTT'S WORK ON VEGETABLE DIET.—No. IV.

[Communicated for the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal.]

IN my last communication, I considered, at some length, the testimony of Dr. Alcott's correspondents. I showed, or endeavored to show, that the evidence was partial and imperfect, and much of it irrelevant to the matter in dispute—that it did not warrant any reasonable person in taking the position which Dr. Alcott chooses to occupy; and, particularly, that it did not bear out any man in fixing the stigma of holding the doctor's opinions on the medical profession. I did not examine so critically the testimony of the six squires and two ladies who appear among the doctor's witnesses, because I did not think their evidence of sufficient importance to require special notice. It differs not, so far as I can see, from the extra-professional evidence which is daily brought forward to attest the marvellous cures of such arrant impostors as B. Brandreth and John Williams.

Dr. Alcott closes that part of his book which is devoted to the letters of his correspondents, with "additional statements" concerning his own case. The doctor's story is certainly an amusing one, and, perhaps, it is not wonderful that he is fond of telling it. As for myself, I am willing to hear it, even for the third time. I should be glad to give it for the reader's edification, and in the author's own words, but my limits will not permit. It shows pretty clearly, I think, that the doctor is an enthusiast, and has had his head turned by too much thinking of his own dreams. I honestly believe that he has confounded fancy and fact somewhat in the manner that ardent minds are known to do who become excessively enamored of their own stories, and have been in the habit of telling them for a long time and on every occasion. He says of himself, that from the age of five or six months to two years he "was literally crammed with flesh meat, usually of the most gross kind," and all with the idea of making him stout and healthy. "The result [he proceeds] was an accumulation of adipose substance [*fat* is a better word], which rendered me one of the most unsightly, not to say monstrous, productions of nature." At the age of two he had hooping cough, which broke his constitution, and destroyed his relish for flesh meat. At fourteen he became "reconciled to flesh and fish" again, and "indulged in *it* [in the use of *them*] quite freely." Then came measles and dropsy. "These two complaints, or the mercury, digitalis and other poisons [*other* poisons, mind you] used in endeavoring to effect a cure," left the doctor in a sorry pickle—"left him with an eruptive disease and with weak eyes." He afterwards discontinued, chiefly, the use of stimulating food and drink, and thenceforth throve