

Dr. Tyler Smith (vide *The Lancet*, March 27, 1847) will satisfy any impartial inquirer that obstetric etherization is, at least, of very doubtful benefit, and of very complicated and uncertain operation."

He quotes some remarks of Baron Dubois (see Number of this Journal for October, 1847, p. 521), and of Mr. Tyler Smith, and then observes:

"These facts, and three deaths at least from the new agent, chloroform, besides many other serious results, will probably satisfy most practitioners that 'a meddling midwifery' is still a bad midwifery.

"In common with most teachers, I have long inculcated at Guy's Hospital, 'that unnecessary interference with the providentially arranged process of healthy labour is sure, sooner or later, to be followed by injurious and fatal consequences.'

"I think the chloroform will be no exception to these precepts; nay, so sure am I that it needs only to be extensively used to insure its entire abandonment, that I would willingly leave it to such a result, if it might be accomplished without further loss of life. But the instances in which it has already proved fatal, although they will alarm, may not so quickly, as is to be desired, lead to its final relinquishment. It is, therefore, a duty to urge every just plea against its further use.

"I forbear," he further says, "to enter into the question—whether there be any form of labour in which chloroform should be used?—further than to say, in instrumental and flooding cases, we rely as a considerable evidence of the safety of the patient, and of the uninjured state of the womb and adjacent parts, on that very pain which it is the purpose of the gas to destroy. Whether in the very difficult cases of turning, where the womb is most firmly and tonically contracted round the child, it might be of use, I am not prepared to say. I fear, however, it would produce but little benefit. Lately, at Enfield, I was consulted in a case of rigid perinæum, where the chloroform was fully exhibited, under the impression that it might induce relaxation. No such result followed. Dr. Millar, with great promptitude, applied twenty leeches to the part, and the child was eventually born dead. If there was any effect produced here, it was to weaken the uterine effort, but whether the chloroform produced the death of the child, I cannot say."

61. *Delirium caused by Inhalation of Chloroform.*—Dr. MITCHELL, of Dublin, relates a case in which he administered chloroform to a patient in labour, with the effect of rendering her violently delirious.—*Lond. Med. Gaz.*, Jan. 1848, from *Dub. Med. Press*.

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62. *Recovery from a poisonous dose of Strychnia.*—Dr. THOMAS ANDERSON records, in the *Monthly Journal and Retrospect of the Medical Sciences*, a case in which seven grains of strychnia were taken without producing fatal consequences. The subject of the case was a gentleman who had long suffered from severe tic douloureux, for the relief of which he was in the habit of taking muriate of morphia, in increased doses, until three and a half grains were necessary to produce its effect. Having occasion to go a short distance in the country on business, he took, previous to setting out, his usual dose, 3½ grains of strychnine, given him by an apothecary by mistake for muriate of morphia, which he placed on his tongue and swallowed;—he remarked at the time that it was extremely bitter, and that the taste was more than usually persistent, but it did not occur to him that anything was wrong. Shortly after, however, while walking along the street, he felt slightly indisposed, the most prominent symptom being a sense of numbness in the back of the legs, which he attributed to the effects of cold, to which he had been exposed in the early part of the morning. As these symptoms did not appear of any importance, he proceeded by a public conveyance to the village where his business lay, and returned by the next opportunity. During the whole of this time the symptoms remained precisely as they were the moment he first observed them; but as he was walking along, on his return, they suddenly increased, the numbness being accompanied by a sense of want of power, and a sort of drag-