

TWINS. — PROFUSE BLOODING. —
PLUGGING AND COMPRESSION.
—RECOVERY.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR:—I was called to attend Mrs. Hall, who was in labour, on Tuesday evening, Sept. 16, 1836, at 10 o'clock, p.m.; I found the labour far advanced, the soft parts dilated and dilatable, but the pains very feeble. Suddenly they became stronger, and with one tremendous pain the whole of the child was born. Notwithstanding the infant was very large, I found, on placing my hand over the abdomen, that it was very little decreased in size. On making an examination, per vaginam, I found a second bag of waters, and with great difficulty ascertained (the child being very high up) that the head presented. The pains for a time left the patient; at length they returned, and about an hour after the first child, the second was born—the largest twin I have ever seen. The first child was born at about half-past 11, and the second at about half-past 12. During the labour, and after the birth of the children, very firm pressure was applied over the abdomen, but yet the uterus did not contract, nor would the placenta come away. After waiting about an hour, and using the usual means to cause their expulsion, and finding hæmorrhage to a fearful extent coming on, I immediately proceeded to remove them. On introducing my hand and arm into the uterus, I was obliged to carry it to the extent of my elbow, and even then I could scarcely reach the top part of the uterus. The uterus was so relaxed that I do not think it had at all contracted since the birth of the children; the children, too, be it remembered, were immensely large. With great difficulty I found the sides of the uterus, and ascertained that the placenta were very extensively adherent to the uterus, and with still greater difficulty I separated the adhesions; all the while the blood pouring out like a torrent! After the removal of the placenta, the uterus partially contracted, but still the flooding continued, and the life of my patient was fast, very fast, ebbing away. I lost no time then in plugging, and this I did most effectually by means of a silk handkerchief, so that she could not lose one drop of blood. Still the uterus had not properly contracted, although the firmest pressure had been applied, and I had given her a tea-spoonful and a half (at two different times) of laudanum. I therefore applied *very liberally* cold vinegar and water to the abdomen and labia. The patient's appearance was still death-like; the skin was cold, and the pulse was fluttering. Brandy, slightly diluted with water, was liberally and frequently given to her. At this stage of the case, I thought it

would be well to call in further assistance; I therefore sent for my friend Mr. Knowles, who most promptly and kindly attended the call. When he arrived, the patient was a little better. We thought it advisable to apply compresses of stockings and napkins over the region of the uterus, and a roller firmly over all. The patient continued in a precarious state for some hours. I saw her the next morning, and found her much better; I removed the handkerchief from the vagina; she made water, and then felt very comfortable. Suffice it to say that our patient rapidly recovered from the effects of her fearful hæmorrhage.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

PYE HENRY CHAVASSE, Surgeon:
Birmingham, 12, Old Square,
Oct. 9, 1839.

BLACK PITCH IN HÆMORRHOIDAL
AFFECTIONS.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR:—I have been induced to forward the present communication for insertion in your valuable columns, on account of the happy results that have followed the administration of *pix nigra* in hæmorrhoidal affections.

Pix nigra, or what is more commonly called black pitch, has not been employed as a therapeutic remedy, so far as I am aware, in any internal complaint, either by ancient or modern writers. I was led to adopt its employment from the following circumstances:—A young female, whom I attended in the confinement of her first child, was, in one month after delivery, attacked with symptoms of internal hæmorrhoids. The best-directed medical treatment, which was continued for two months, failed to produce permanent relief. A female acquaintance who called to see her, on inquiring into the state of her health, and finding her suffering from hæmorrhoids, told her to take two small pills, composed of *pix nigra*. Having found no relief from medical art, she at once embraced the proposal of her friend, and took two pills. According to her own account, the tenesmus and the sinking at the pit of the stomach, almost immediately fled. When I next saw her she was much improved in her general appearance; when she informed me that pitch pills had entirely removed her complaint.

Two of the first authorities of the present day, Sir B. Brodie* and Dr. Copland,† when speaking of hæmorrhoidal affections, strongly recommend the class of medicines termed *balsams*. I may here, with equal propriety, place that medicinal agent, *pix nigra*, in juxtaposition with the balsams. Respecting the *modus operandi*, I can add no-

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