

**SEARCH. STILLBORN,
ELEMENTS, ART,
REVOLUTION, COURAGE,
HOMŒOPATHY**

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Search. Stillborn, elements, art, revolution, courage, homeœopathy by Anonymous

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ANONYMOUS

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ART.
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LONDON:
L. BOOTH, 307 REGENT STREET, W.

1866.

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SEARCH.

STILLBORN.

“ ‘ Can such things be below, and God above ? ’
Faltered the King ;—Replied the Genius—‘ Nay,
This is the state that Sages most approve ;
This is man civilised ! ’ ”

King Arthur, by Sir E. Bulwer Lytton.

THE following correspondence appeared in
“ Public Opinion,” during January and February,
1866 :—

INFANTICIDE.

Sir,—Permit me to draw your attention to some facts which throw a strong light on the question of child destruction. The power of example must be admitted ; and if it can be shown that foetal life is often sacrificed by the members of an educated profession, it is not surprising that the ignorant, in their agony of mind and body, should follow suit. I enclose, for your satisfaction, opinions from various most eminent medical writers, proving beyond dispute the fearful loss of life from professional child-de-

struction in Britain, and the following statistics speak for themselves:—

The average frequency of this fearful operation among British practitioners, according to Dr. Churchill, is 1 in 291 labours; whilst in Paris, Mesdames Lachapelle and Boivin only had recourse to it 28 times in 42,760 labours. Few but the initiated know the meaning often hidden under that obituary notice, "Stillborn:" such cases are not even registered.

The "Dublin Review," April 1858, contained a noble protest on this subject; but who dare impugn any practice of our real social rulers, in an age whose epitaph well may be,

"Avid of wealth,
Profuse of health."

I am, Sir, your obedient Servant,

SEARCH.

Extracts.

"Many a practitioner has sacrificed a child's life at the shrine of his own ignorance."—
"London Practice of Midwifery," by G. Jewel, M. D.

Dr. Churchill says:—"By the use of the perforator, not only are all the children destroyed, but extensive statistics have shown that about 1 in 5 of the mothers perish."

Dr. F. Ramsbotham says:—"And much do

I fear, that to the facility with which this operation can be accomplished have been sacrificed the lives of many children."

Frank says:— "The medical police is restricted to public business, and directed against contagion, epidemics, quacks, &c.; but it is not considered that thousands are slaughtered in the quiet sick-room. Governments should, at once, either banish medical men and their art, or they should take proper measures that the lives of people may be safer than at present, when they look far less after the practice of this dangerous art, and the murders committed in it, than after the lowest trades."

INFANTICIDE.

Sir,—I fear your correspondent, whose pseudonym is "Search," is wilfully guilty of misrepresentation when he asserts "that foetal life is often 'sacrificed' by members of an educated profession."

Your correspondent is, perhaps, some theoretical philanthropist who, though a dabbler in the theory of midwifery, has never practised the art—has never been placed in the dilemma of choosing between the present death of both mother and child, and the salvation of the mother (perhaps of many) at the expense only of a few hours of mere existence in a maybe hydroce-

phalic monster. Fœtal life is never taken by any member of our profession, except in the firm belief of its *urgent necessity*—that is to say, if that probably abnormal intra-uterine life be not forthwith taken, a responsible social being (on whose future life, perhaps, many are totally dependent), will be sacrificed at the shrine of some meddler in midwifery whose pseudonym is “Search.”

“Search” ought not and shall not be allowed with impunity thus to libel a profession most of whose members’ lives are spent in the public weal. Let “Search,” before writing further, accompany some earnest practitioner of the art he so grossly misrepresents to the lonely way-side cottage, where, on a bed of extremest agony, surrounded by fearfully anxious friends and relatives, lies a being whose own life and that of her offspring must be inevitably sacrificed unless that practitioner ably discharge the sacred trust committed to his keeping.

When “Search” has thus lived and learned, he will not malign a hard-worked, underpaid, yet honourable and incalculably useful body of men, who practise the art of midwifery with care and discretion.

I am, Sir, faithfully yours,

WALTER SUMTER, M.D.

Registered (late fellow of Obstetrical Society, &c.) London.

INFANTICIDE.

Sir,—Your correspondent, Dr. Sumter, accuses me of wilful misrepresentation: such language is hardly justifiable, even from one whose interests are assailed, when he cannot attempt to disprove the statistics, &c., adduced by me. He endeavours to divert the question from the real point at issue, namely, whether the power of life and death should be entrusted to the discretion of doctors, by curious speculations as to the individuality of "Search," which are certainly amusing; and he portrays a scene at a wayside cottage with great imaginative talent.

But neither amusement or imagination are relevant to a question of murder, and fact fearfully contrasts with his romance. Instances have been known of the child breathing and crying loudly on its birth, after the head had been opened and the brain partially extracted. *Vide* "Med. Chirurg. Review," January 1834.

Chapman gives an instance in which the attendant, supposing the child dead, amputated its arm: it was afterwards born alive, and grew up to manhood.

These are but specimens of what must constantly occur, for Dr. Conquest says,— "It has been extremely gratifying to several highly esteemed friends, as well as to myself, to have been instrumental by this means in saving not a