

XVII. *The Case of a Woman big with Child, who recovered of the Small-Pox, and was afterwards delivered of a dead Child full of the Pustules of that Distemper. In a Letter from the Reverend Mr. W. Derham, F. R. S. to Dr. Hans Sloane, S. R. Secr.*

Upminster, October 7. 1713

S I R,

**T**HERE was, in the Parish next me, a Great-bellied Woman who had the Small-Pox, and was pretty well recovered, so that she was able to take something to Purge her after it: And on *August 30.* last, she took a Purge (I know not what) which did not work; and on *September the 1st,* another Purge, which gave her only a Stool or two. Upon which, *September the 3d,* she took another stronger Purge, that work'd so violently upwards and downwards, that she fell into Faintings and Convulsions: about which time I conceive her Child within her died, but of which she was not deliver'd till *September the 8th.* The Child was a Female, and in appearance well made, lusty and strong. At its Delivery, the Midwife judg'd it had been dead five or six Days; so that the Belly was burst, and the Bowels came out, and the whole Body was inclining to be rotten.

But that which seem'd most remarkable to me, and indeed occasioned me to take Notice of the Case, was, That the Child was very full of the Small Pox, so full, that the Midwife said, hardly a Pins-head could be put between the Blisters, which were very Plump, and full  
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of Matter, like the Pustules of an Adult, when the Small-Pox is at the Height, only a little depressed in the middle. But as full as the Child was, the Mother had as few, and very favourably; her Child, I suppose, undergoing that which would have been more severe upon her.

Having thus related the Case to you, as the Midwife told it me, I shall leave it to you, and such good Judges as your self, to determine these two Things,

- I: When a Woman hath the Small-Pox in Pregnancy, Whether it be likely that the Child should be in danger of catching and having that Distemper after its Birth?
- II. Whether the Child I have been speaking of, had the Small-Pox at the very same time the Mother had it, and not rather afterwards, by reason the Child was full of it some time after the Mother was well recovered?

I am inclined to think, that the great Flux and tendency of the Blood to the Child in the Womb, might draw in the Humour, and prevent the greater Eruption of the Small-Pox in the Mother; and that for want of a due Expenditure thereof, the remainder afterwards broke out in the Child, and that the Child really had it after the Mother; Nature making the Discharges upon the Child which were not completed on the Mother. But I fear I shall need your Pardon for presuming to interpose my Judgment before so great a Judge— I am, &c.

W. D E R H A M.