

RUPTURE OF THE UMBILICAL CHORD.

TO THE EDITORS OF THE PROVINCIAL MEDICAL AND SURGICAL JOURNAL.

GENTLEMEN,—If you think the following accident in midwifery worth noticing in your weekly journal, it is much at your service. Perhaps it furnishes a hint both to practitioners and nurses.

Your obedient servant,

E. COPEMAN.

A short time since, I was summoned in haste to attend Mrs. C. in labour. I had previously had intimation that her labours were generally very quickly over, and therefore hastened to her assistance with as little delay as possible. When I arrived, however, I found it “all over,” the child born and dressed, and the placenta removed. The patient was pale and faint, having, as I understood, lost a good deal of blood before the expulsion of the placenta. On my making inquiries about the infant, the nurse put on a countenance portentous of mischief, real or imaginary, such a one as accoucheurs desire not to look upon, though often doomed to behold. She told me she had been much frightened, and that something was “very wrong” with the child. The cause of her alarm was as follows: the umbilical cord had been twisted about the neck and body of the child, and being very thin, and the child forced into the

world in a great hurry, had been torn off close to the navel, there being not enough left to admit of a ligature being placed upon it. As the child was bleeding very much, the nurse, in the hurry of the moment, pinched up the skin surrounding the navel, and tied a piece of cotton round the whole, by which means the hæmorrhage was stopped. By passing a small curved needle and ligature through what small portion of cord was still remaining, I was enabled to draw it out just far enough to put a few threads round it without including any portion of skin. I then removed the ligature which had been applied by the nurse, and found it had not been tied tight enough to injure the skin. No sloughing ensued, the umbilicus closed at the usual time, and the child suffered no further inconvenience.

Coltishall, Oct. 2, 1841.