

of absorption. The impurities circulating in the blood of the foetus are here discharged into the maternal vessels, to be removed by the excretory organs of the mother; so that the placenta may be said to fulfil the double office of the lungs and stomach in the foetus. In consequence of the intimate relation existing between the mother and the foetus, there is no doubt that nervous impressions experienced by the former, such as fear, anger, disgust, &c., which disturb the circulation, may occasion deformities and deficiencies of various kinds, naevi, warts, &c., in the latter. The circulation in the foetus has been already described. (See page 205.)

UMBILICAL CORD AND AMNIOTIC FLUID.—The umbilical cord, or funis, is the connecting link between the foetus and placenta. In early life it is very short, and consists of that portion of the allantois or chorion next the abdomen. The umbilical vesicle is situated between the amnion and chorion, the rest of the space being filled with a gelatinous fluid. The amnion continues to expand, the quantity of liquor amnii increases, and about the beginning of the fifth month the amnion comes in contact with the chorion, the umbilical vesicle and gelatinous fluid gradually disappearing. The umbilical cord at the same time elongates in proportion to the increasing size of the amnion, and towards the close of gestation the amnion and chorion blend together and constitute what is commonly called the "membranes." As the cord lengthens it twists from right to left. It consists of the two umbilical arteries, the umbilical vein, the urachus, and the remains of the umbilical vesicle, imbedded in a gelatinous material and surrounded by a folding of the amnion. The cord at full term varies in length from one to three feet.