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DRY LABOR.*

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Have you ever been in St. George's Chapel, Windsor Castle? If not, come in with me to one of its lower corners and look at something sadly interesting from an obstetrical standpoint—the cenotaph of the Princess Charlotte. This monument, built in memory of one of England's most dearly beloved women, serves also as a memorial of the saddest obstetrical calamity recorded in British history. All England, in 1817, was waiting for a happy termination of the Princess Charlotte's pregnancy. The membranes were ruptured on Monday at 7 p.m. Labor pains followed soon after and continued in varying degrees for fifty hours. There is every reason to suppose that in this "dry" labor the uterine contractions were accompanied by more than the average amount of suffering. The first stage probably lasted about ten to twelve hours; the second stage thirty-eight to forty hours. The three distinguished physicians in charge decided that "giving assistance was quite out of the question," as the "labor proceeded regularly although slowly. The child was born without artificial assistance." Soon after delivery there was post partum hemorrhage and hour-glass contraction and the placenta was removed by the hand introduced into the uterus. In two hours she became "sick at the stomach, had noises in her ears, became talkative and had a frequent pulse." In another hour symptoms of pulmonary thrombosis occurred. Patient died in a few minutes.

It is somewhat difficult to realize that this sad tragedy was enacted in England, the birthplace of the midwifery force,

* Read at meeting of Ontario Medical Association.