

Look for the presence of any hernia, umbilical, femoral, inguinal, or of imperforate anus. Always turn the child over and examine the spine for spina bifida—*i.e.*, a protrusion of the spinal membranes. An excess or deficiency of fingers and toes, talipes, etc., should also be looked for.

#### MENTAL DEFECTIVES.

We will come at once to the most serious, perplexing, and interesting group of defectives. The most important as well as the most distressing forms of defectiveness are those met with in connection with the nervous system, particularly those we speak of as mental deficiencies.

These cases are important from the point of view of the family, but even more so from that of the nation, as they represent not only an actual loss to the State, but often an added burden and danger. It is a matter of great importance that attention should be devoted to the study of the normal development of the healthy child, which is an essential preliminary to a fruitful study of the deficient class, and of recent years increasing attention has been devoted to this subject. I should be glad if any words of mine should arouse your enthusiastic observation and study of the manifestations of the unfolding infant mind.

There are many questions which we should like to ask in this connection. For instance: Does a child come into the world, so far as its mental condition is concerned with, as it were, "a clean slate"? Is the mind a blank at birth, or are pre-natal impressions possible?

Very early in the life of the infant there are evidences of an awakening of the mind, and in connection with the study of the normal infant it is important to recognise these. Take the normal infant at birth, and observe it during the ensuing months.

*First Month.*—After the first or second day the newly-born infant will manifest evidences of sensitiveness to touch. At the second or third day it starts when roughly handled. By the fourth day it indicates its power of hearing. On the seventh there is sensibility to taste. Among the inmates of our Infants' Hospital there are many babies who show marked preference in regard to our milk prescriptions. Quite early an infant shows its pleasure in nursing, bathing, and in regard to light, and gives evidence of discomfort when hungry, hot, wet, or when its clothing is tight or uncomfortable.

As the sorrows of life predominate over the joys, it is seemly that the child's tears should appear before its smiles; and this is usually the case, for it does not smile, as a rule, till

about the 26th day. Memory develops very early as to taste and smell, and during the first month certain vowel sounds are emitted.

In the cries of an infant there are distinct varieties of expression—those of pain, hunger, impatience, and anger are early distinguishable.

*Second Month.*—At the second month incoordination in the movement of the eyes is still present. By this time the infant recognises the human voice, turns towards sounds, shows pleasure at music and at the sight of the human face. It also smiles and laughs quietly when tickled. From the 43rd to 51st day consonant sounds are first made.

*Third Month.*—At the third month the infant recognises its parents, and makes sounds of joy at the sight of them; it crows and babbles in baby language. At the ninth week it notes the sound of a watch.

*Fourth Month.*—At the fourth month objects are firmly grasped, and the infant may manifest evidence of joy at seeing itself in a mirror. By the fourteenth week a well-developed infant can sit up, and about this time begins to imitate.

*Fifth Month.*—Strangers are now discriminated. The infant is fond of crumpling paper, and carries all objects to its mouth.

*Sixth Month.*—At the sixth month it can raise itself to a sitting posture, and is said to be able to compare the image of father or mother in the mirror with the original.

*Seventh Month.*—There are now manifestations of astonishment, the infant also sighs, and averts its head as a sign of refusal.

*Eighth Month.*—At the eighth month surprise is expressed at new sounds and sights, and interest is evidenced in farmyard sounds, and imitations of cries of animals.

*Ninth Month.*—The infant stands on its feet without support, takes a general interest in things, strikes its hands together with joy, exhibits fear, and understands some of the questions put to it.

*Tenth Month.*—Monosyllabic speech begins and powers of imitation develop rapidly.

*Eleventh Month.*—The rudiments of obedience develop—for instance, the child is often quieted when screaming by "sh."

*Twelfth Month.*—Obedience and considerable advance in hygienic habits should have been attained.

The above suggestions are mere outline sketches of the unfolding of the infant mind.

(To be concluded.)

In a future issue we shall publish the interesting lecture delivered by Dr. Kelynack on Tuesday last on "Disorders Incident to Birth."

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