

I should refer to the characteristics of the intestinal dejections in these cases. You will frequently find masses of food are undigested, the colour of the dejections is abnormal, and they show a great tendency to become whitish and like clay. The normal dejections in the infant should be without odour, in these cases they become extremely offensive. That is one of the characteristics of the intestinal conditions of early rickets.

The next symptom one should watch for is restlessness at night, particularly throwing off the clothes, the baby tossing about very restlessly, so that the nurse reports that it is difficult to keep the clothes on the baby. At the same time that you obtain that history, you will learn of another important feature: sweating of the head. In all cases of rickets at some time or another it is one of the symptoms of the disease, and in some cases it is a very marked feature.

THE CONDITION OF RACHITIC BABIES.

The actual condition of babies varies very much, according to the expression which the disease has taken. In some babies you will see the rachitic rosary very marked, and perhaps that is the typical sign of the disease. At other times extreme flabbiness is the most marked feature, and of the two the extreme flabbiness is rather the worse because it means that all the tissues and muscles and ligaments are definitely affected. When we come to treat this condition in the baby, we very often find we have great difficulty. It is usually a big baby, very flabby, very heavy, with all its tissues wrong. The mother and the nurse have been loading this baby up with more and more food, in the endeavour to induce a gain in weight, because it is not thriving. There generally ensues a battle between the mother on the one hand, very likely assisted by the nurse, if she is not sufficiently trained, and the physician. In such cases as that, it is imperative that loss of weight should occur. You will remember in the sections that I threw upon the screen I demonstrated the large amount of material, and the amount of wrong material. All that wrong material has to be got rid of throughout the body, whether in the brain, or the bones, or the muscles, before we can get the deposition of good healthy tissues. The one tendency of the mother and nurse is to load the baby with food, to supply the baby with milk, bread, and milk, and so on, while the wish of the physician, who is anxious about the case, is to get the digestive organs into order, to correct the intestinal conditions, to get a loss of weight, and to throw the baby on its own tissues. Since

we have to get rid of this wrong tissue, the only method of getting rid of it, is by burning it up, that is by oxidation, and if we deprive the baby of fat and proteids, it will go to its own tissues to maintain its heat and functions, and then break up and remove the degenerate material. So when you have a heavy rachitic baby to deal with, do not be alarmed that it is losing weight—that is a matter for congratulation, for if it continues in that condition of gross flabbiness it will very likely die of convulsions. The nurses in this hospital see a great number of atrophic babies, but they seldom see babies in convulsions. However much the atrophic baby may suffer, it does not get convulsions. The typical baby to get convulsions is the baby I have been describing to you as the flabby rachitic baby.

THE TREATMENT OF RICKETS.

Remember also that some of those babies presenting all the cardinal signs of the disease, frequently get a prize at baby shows as being fine specimens of nutrition. A baby that I know of gained a prize—it was a baby of 2½ years of age, and it could not walk.

The treatment of rickets is essentially dietetic, and the adjustment of the diet in all cases must be governed, not by the condition of the bones and ligaments, but entirely by the condition of the digestive system. First get that clear, and the liver acting better, the intestinal dejections normal, the appetite healthy, and then you may gradually proceed to increase the food. As you increase the food, remember that fat is the element which should be increased within moderate bounds, as being the one element most essential for the perfection of the structure, and for the correction of the various defects. Nothing will cure the nervous manifestations of rickets so quickly as a due supply of fat. Remember also with flabby babies that a due supply of the proteid element is very important, and keep the sugar down, so that the baby may be able to burn up its own tissues as far as possible, and eliminate the rachitic material.

Progress of State Registration.

The Bills for the State Registration of Trained Nurses, though put down for a second reading in the House of Commons, are not likely to reach this stage during the present Session. The inevitable opposition has been notified, this time by Mr. J. Annan Bryce, Member for Inverness Burghs, and Mr. J. F. P. Rawlinson, K.C., Member for Cambridge University.

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