

fermentation of cane sugar and such like materials. Frequently the baby vomits a large amount of tough tenacious curd. This curd is formed by the precipitation of the caseinogen in milk combined with the lime salts—the calcium. At once that should lead us to watch the food of the infant, because the amount of proteids, or the character of the proteids, is probably altogether wrong.

There may be another form of vomiting largely associated with the class of case I have been describing, in which, after the initial vomit, the baby continues to vomit at irregular intervals, or instead of the initial large vomit, you may find that the baby within half an hour is persistently vomiting small amounts of curd and sour smelling fluid. In such cases as that, there are clear indications that the whole of the gastric digestion is in a pathological condition, and not only have we to think of the suffering of the baby as regards vomiting, but we should remember that if the baby is continually vomiting that fluid, a certain amount is also passing into the intestine, producing serious disorder in the intestine.

Then there is another class of vomiting seen as a result of malnutrition, and it is of rather a curious character. It occurs, as a rule, rather later after feeding than the one I have been describing, and is characterised by the fact that the baby vomits clear fluid. It is very often a large amount, and the amount indeed is so large that in some cases it gives rise to some wonder as to where the baby derives the amount of fluid from. For instance, a baby may be receiving three or four ounces of milk or milk mixtures; it will not vomit any curd, but, perhaps two-and-a-half hours after the feed, it will vomit this clear watery fluid. You examine the vomit, and you see that it has practically none of the characteristics of milk, there is no curd, and no fat, and consequently you infer that it cannot be by reason of the milk having caused indigestion. The amount may be so large that the pillow may be quite wet and the baby's garments may be thoroughly soaked by the amount vomited. Another characteristic of this condition is the irregularity of occurrence, the baby going perhaps one or two days without vomiting, and then suddenly vomiting large amounts. By large amounts I mean four or five ounces of fluid. To what is this due? It is a very interesting condition, allied to a condition which we know as hyperchloridia, which is seen in neurasthenia in women. It is due to the condition of the nervous system, which fails to control the secretion of the digestive glands, and at intervals the glands pour out this watery fluid.

It is also a very interesting condition as regards treatment, because, while in most cases of vomiting one would do well to decrease the food material, in such a case by far the best treatment is to increase the amount of fat. I dare say you will remember what I told you about Pawlow's researches, and how fat inhibits gastric secretion. The administration of fat acts on the mucous membrane of the stomach in preventing as far as may be the secretion of this fluid, and at the same time provides the nutritive material which is so urgently required for the nervous system of the baby.

Such vomiting as that may occur in other conditions where the nervous system is upset. I remember seeing a case some time ago of a baby who had been fed on modified milk. It did not vomit the milk, but about two-and-a-half hours afterwards the baby vomited this clear fluid. In addition to this symptom of vomiting the baby presented some alarming symptoms. Its eyes were turned upwards, and I very much feared that there might be some cerebral trouble, or that some grave constitutional condition was affecting the infant. That, however, was not the case, and the reason in that particular baby for the vomiting was a condition of intestinal obstruction, due to a mass of undigested fat and proteids in the intestine. As a matter of fact, it was when the curd reached the intestine and could not pass further, that these irritant signs arose, and as soon as the intestine was cleared, all these symptoms disappeared. So, remember that if you have a case of constipation caused by a large amount of fat in the intestine, you may witness symptoms similar to those I have described.

One other characteristic vomiting I may refer to, although it is not common in infants, but is common among fairly young children—cerebral vomiting. It is characterised by its suddenness; gushes of fluid pour out of the infant, and one of the prominent features is that the contraction of the stomach in these cases is so powerful that the baby seems to be taking no part in the process—the stomach seems to be vomiting, and the baby seems quite independent of it. The vomit shoots out sometimes a considerable distance from the baby. That is the characteristic cerebral vomiting when, for instance, there is a tumour on the brain. We see it occasionally in babies where there is cerebral irritation. This kind of vomiting and the vomiting of the clear fluid which I have described rather tend to merge one into the other, but as regards cerebral trouble proper, it is seldom seen in infants.

*(To be continued.)*

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