

quote Dr. Kerr Love's own words, "Nearly two-thirds of the children born are dead, or, if alive, are either deaf or blind or both (106 in 172), and with a few exceptions there are no adults in the families. In many of the families one or more deaths from meningitis have occurred."

It will be agreed that this is a fearful record for one city. But it is more than probable that it is equalled, or even surpassed, in some of our other great cities. It shows an appalling waste of life and of health from one disease alone, a waste that is eminently preventable. That such a waste should exist is a disgrace to Christianity and to civilisation.

Owing to the difficulties in applying the Wassermann test extensively in a city like London, the writer has not had the opportunity of contributing any large mass of evidence to corroborate Dr. Kerr Love's results, but those cases which he has been able to examine confirm them. Out of 48 cases of sporadic deaf-birth, the Wassermann test was negative in 45, or 93.75 per cent., and positive in 3, or 6.25 per cent. The difficulties of obtaining any mass of evidence in cases of deaf-born children by means of the Wassermann test arise from the fact that congenital deafness caused by syphilis is generally due to an infection which is expiring.

When, however, deafness is acquired in the earlier years of life, the Wassermann reaction gives much more conclusive results, and other manifestations of syphilis, of which blindness is the most constant, are usually present. Out of 18 families in Glasgow, Dr. Kerr Love found there were 153 pregnancies, of which 85 children survived, and 68 were dead. Of the former 25 were deaf and blind. In London, the writer found that in 40 families there were 243 pregnancies (including one twin pregnancy), of which 141 survived and 103 died, and of the former 43 were blind and deaf. Taking the averages of these two investigations, it will be seen that their results correspond closely:—

	Average number of		
	Children born.	Surviving	Deaf and Blind.
Dr. Love's statistics	8.5	4.7	1.3
The Writer's statistics	6.07	3.5	1.07

The greater frequency of a positive blood-test in cases of acquired deafness as compared with that in congenital deafness is shown by the fact that, in 10 cases of the former, the writer found 6, or 60 per cent., giving a negative, and 4, or 40 per cent., a positive reaction.

It is noteworthy that, in the 40 families investigated by the writer, the survivors were nearly all young (the number of adults being under ten), and that, although they were "apparently healthy," they were likely to have the poison of syphilis in their blood.

The frequency of congenital syphilis as a cause of acquired deafness in children, in the experience of the writer is too considerable to be passed over lightly. Out of 983 cases with which he has had to deal in Deaf Schools, there were 69; or 7.0 per cent., due to this cause. The one great fact that becomes patent to anyone who has any experience of the havoc wrought by congenital syphilis in the life and health of children is that it could be prevented by adequate measures. The sin of syphilis has been talked about with bated breath for years, but not the real sin of syphilis. That lies not in its method of propagation, but in the way the disease has been regarded hitherto. The real sin of syphilis is less one of commission than of omission. Happily for humanity, times are changing, and we are now discussing openly what formerly many of us only dared to think—that the time has come, it has, indeed, long been overdue, when syphilis should be regarded as a disease, and not as a secret sin, and that it is one of the most fell enemies of social life, one that, properly handled, can be stamped out as surely as smallpox has been eliminated and as tuberculosis is being eradicated — by common-sense preventive measures.

GASTRO-ENTEROSTOMY.

Illness is no respecter of persons, but nowadays the skill of the modern surgeon deals successfully with many conditions which formerly invariably ended fatally. This has been strikingly exemplified recently in the case of the King of Sweden, upon whom the operation of gastro-enterostomy has been successfully performed. The operation is undertaken for the purpose of affording relief in certain cases of ulceration of the stomach, and of constriction of its pyloric end, when healing of the ulcer takes place. The result of such constriction is that the food is unable to pass normally into the intestine.

The purpose of the operation is to make a new opening in a healthy part of the stomach, and to unite the intestine to this. The intention is to permit the food to pass normally, and also, by relieving the pressure of food on the ulcerated surface, to permit the ulcer to heal. The operation is often completely successful.

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