

DISEASES OF CHILDREN.*

(Concluded from page 328.)

It will readily be understood that in reviewing a book which is professedly a practical modern manual on the diseases of children, systematic, small, and complete, and which admirably achieves its object, it is impossible within the limits of a review to refer to all its features, although we have devoted considerable space to our notice of it, as we consider the book important, valuable, and interesting.

Much attention is devoted to the care of infants—artificial infant feeding, improper diet in infancy, disorders of digestion and nutrition and their treatment, rickets and scurvy are all exhaustively discussed. Then there follow chapters on diseases of the mouth and throat and alimentary canal, on tuberculosis, on diseases of metabolism and the ductless glands, of the circulatory and other systems.

CONGENITAL HEART DISEASE.

Amongst the diseases of the circulatory system congenital heart disease is described in considerable detail. We read:—

“Many cases have to be ascribed to imperfect development, and exhibit, in addition to the abnormality of the heart, other forms of imperfect development. . . .

The deformity sometimes consists in the persistence of foetal conditions (openings), sometimes in strictures of valves, and sometimes in various rarer conditions. In a few rare cases intra-uterine infection apparently has produced foetal endocarditis.

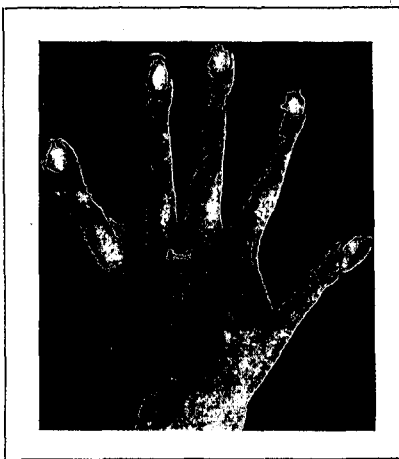
Lesions.—In most cases several lesions are present, the most common combination being pulmonary stenosis with patent ventricular septum.

Symptoms.—A very important point to grasp in connection with these cases is that in many cases there is entire absence of any symptoms. The condition is only found to be present on physical examination and the auscultation of a murmur.

* By A. Dingwall-Fordyce, M.D., Ch.B., F.R.C.P.E. A. & C. Black, Ltd., 4, 5, and 6, Soho Square, London, W.C. 10s.6d. net.

The most common symptom, and the outstanding symptom, is *cyanosis*. In some cases this is extreme, the child being of a blue-black colour. The cyanosis not infrequently grows more marked as the child grows older. It is usually present in most of the severe cases, but may be absent even with severe lesions. Cyanosis may only occur in paroxysms, or it may be noticed only on exertion. When it is marked, examination of the blood discloses a high degree of polycythæmia. It is also accompanied by clubbing of the fingers. Dyspnoea is a common symptom when there is any degree of cyanosis present. It occurs especially on exertion, or after a large meal. Syncopal and epileptiform attacks also sometimes occur in severe cases.

The disturbance of the circulation causes interference with nutrition, and consequently many of these patients are small and undersized. Sometimes, even, where all other symptoms are absent, marked malnutrition of the infant is explained by the discovery of congenital heart disease.”



CLUBBED FINGERS.

MENINGITIS.

Meningitis is a term nurses are very familiar with, but they often have no clear idea of the different varieties. Dr. Dingwall-Fordyce deals with them under the following headings:—Tuberculous meningitis, meningococcal meningitis, (a) acute cerebro-spinal, (b) posterior basal, pneumococcal meningitis,

other forms of meningitis, and meningism.

The illustrations reproduced on page 347 are a case of tuberculous meningitis, showing the retraction of the abdomen, and a pronounced squint; and a case of cerebro-spinal meningitis in a child of eight months.

TUBERCULOUS MENINGITIS.

Tuberculous meningitis is, we are told, the most common form of meningitis and is a not uncommon condition.

Causes.—“Tuberculous infection of the meninges occurs as a condition secondary to tuberculous infection elsewhere in the body, and consequently is not a common condition during the early weeks and months of life. It occurs with increasing frequency among children from six months of age up till the age of one year, and it is most common between the

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