CONGENITAL ANOMALIES OF THE NAILS. FOUR CASES OF HEREDITARY HYPERTROPHY OF THE NAIL-BED ASSOCIATED WITH A HISTORY OF ERUPTED TEETH AT BIRTH.

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As hereditary affections of the nails are not common, the following report may be of interest :

A child, aged 12 years, was brought to the school clinic suffering from scabies. During the examination I noticed the peculiar condition of the nails of both hands and feet. The mother, who accompanied the child, was similarly affected. On inquiry I learned that two other children and the grandfather suffered from the same affection of the nails. The nails are smooth and normal in appearance at the base, there being neither erosion nor striation present. At the free extremity, however, the nail is raised by a dark yellowish horny mass of material so as to project at an angle from the nail-bed. The angular projection of the nails is especially marked in the hands.

A further interesting feature of the cases is a history of each affected member of the family having been born with two or more erupted teeth. These erupted teeth, it is reported, decayed and disappeared about the sixth to the ninth month.

The children are otherwise normal. I have observed that they are all very sensitive in regard to the deformity. Even while sitting at their leisure they unconsciously conceal the finger-tips.

There is no history of syphilis, nor is there any history or sign of ichthyosis, psoriasis or any other form of keratosis.

Examination of the nail-filings and tissue from the nail-bed reveals no sign of ringworm spores.

There is no pain in or around the nails.

The mother states that the condition gives rise to much inconvenience, as the nails "get in the way" whilst sewing, etc. The finger-nails, she states, are often painful after a day's washing.

Owing to the projection from the nail-bed the nails are very liable to injury. The affected members of the family frequently suffer from paronychia. When a nail is lost the new nail at first appears normal, but as it grows up the horny material of the nail-bed gradually reappears, raising the anterior part of the nail until the nail again projects at an angle from its bed.

Family history.—The grandfather, who died recently, suffered from the condition, the nails of both hands and feet being affected. In his case I was unable to obtain a photograph.

He did not know whether his parents had suffered from the condition. He remembered being told that he had been "born with teeth."

He had ten children, of whom the third and fourth (girls) were affected. The third child is the mother of the children photographed. The fourth child died early in life.

I have not been able to trace the condition in any other members of the family.

The photographs show the condition well marked in the nails of the hands. The condition is not so well shown in the nails of the toes, as the anterior parts of the nails have been pressed down by the boots.

In the *Journal* of 1905, No. 17, Garrick Wilson reports three similar cases, except that in these cases there was no history of abnormality of the teeth. I have been unable to find any record of similar cases from the reports of the medical examination of school children.

Treatment.—This is far from satisfactory. In the case of the mother there has been some improvement by the filing down of the horny tissue and rubbing in of salicylic acid ointment. The improvement, however, is only temporary, for when the treatment ceases the horny mass rapidly grows again.

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1. Mother's hand. There is some improvement in the condition as a result of treatment.
2. Showing nails of hands and toes of female child aged 12 years.
3. Nails of hands and toes of boy aged 9 years.
4. Nails of hands and toes of girl aged 6 years.

ILLUSTRATING DR. F. ANDERSON MURRAY'S ARTICLE ON CONGENITAL ANOMALIES OF THE NAILS.

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