CASE NOTES

MARFAN'S SYNDROME*

BY

DORIS ROSE

Eastbourne

A man born in 1902 first noticed some failure of distant vision at the age of 25. In 1943, at the age of 41, the right lens dislocated into the lower pole of the posterior chamber, and the left lens dislocated similarly the following year.

In 1949 sudden deterioration of vision in the left eye was found to be due to sub-acute glaucoma, and a satisfactory trephine was performed. The right eye was given precautionary 1 per cent. eserine drops twice daily, but 4 days later the right eye suddenly developed acute glaucoma. The tension resolved following a right trephine.

In 1951 the visual acuity was 6/5 with aphakic correction with each eye, and the ocular tension was normal although the trephines did not appear to be draining.

In January, 1958, the visual acuity was still 6/5 with each eye, corrected, and the visual fields were full. The lenses were easily seen lying at the lower poles through undilated pupils. The pupils dilated only slightly with a mydriatic.

General Medical Examination.—The patient showed arachnodactyly with height 6' 3", and weight 10 st. 8 lb. There were no signs of physical disease in chest, lungs, abdomen, or central nervous system. The blood pressure was 168/100. The family history was negative.

X-ray Report.—"The bones of the hands and feet show fairly well-marked elongation of the metacarpals and phalanges, especially noticeable in the thumbs. No other abnormality is seen in the limbs. The appearances would be consistent with a mild degree of arachnodactyly. Examination of the spine in this patient shows almost complete ankylosis of the sacro-iliac joints, with a tendency to loss of the normal anterior concavities of the bodies of the lumbar vertebrae and commencing ossification of the anterior common ligament, most marked in the upper lumbar region. These appearances are typical of ankylosing spondylitis. The two conditions would appear to be unrelated and associated by chance."

Summary

A case of Marfan's syndrome is described, in which bilateral luxation of the lenses was followed by bilateral acute glaucoma. Bilateral trephines have been followed by normal tension for nearly 10 years. It is a point of interest that, although the trephines broke the cycle of events, they are not draining. The corrected visual acuity in each eye is 6/6.

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