

CONGENITAL MEMBRANOUS CATARACT, DENTIGEROUS CYST, AND MULTIPLE FIBROLIPOMATA*

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THIS case is of interest because a combination of congenital membranous cataract, dentigerous cyst, and multiple lipomata has not been reported before, and because the mother of the patient contracted mumps during the second month of pregnancy.

Case Report

A female aged 40 years, who had always had poor vision, was admitted to hospital complaining of complete loss of vision for about 6 months. She also complained of small nodular swellings on the abdomen, back, and scalp, and a big swelling at the angle of the lower jaw since birth.

Examination.—Bilateral membranous cataracts with soft lenticular matter were seen at the periphery. There was no rise in intra-ocular pressure and no evidence of past or present iridocyclitis. Visual acuity was perception of light with accurate projection.

A smooth rounded swelling 4" × 3" was present at the angle of the left lower jaw. It was painless and fixed to the bone. X ray examination revealed a dentigerous cyst.

Discussion

Membranous cataracts have been reported by many workers under different names (Vüllers, 1894; Gunn, 1895; Axenfeld, 1904; Greeves, 1914). Baker (1887) and Hess (1899) reported them as total cataracts, but Duke-Elder (1937) described them as membranous.

In the case reported the peculiar combination of congenital lipomata, dentigerous cyst, and membranous cataract was found, and the literature was searched in vain for a similar reported case. It is rather difficult to explain the whole syndrome as one anomaly, or to hold that all three malformations are due to intra-uterine inflammation, but it seems probable that there was some maternal factor during pregnancy which led to vicarious development. It is of interest that the tooth which was seen in the X-ray examination was inverted in the dentigerous cyst. The tooth bed is developed in the sixth week of intra-uterine life and it is at this time that the lens is also forming. It seems possible, therefore, that a common factor was present which adversely influenced the laying of a healthy tooth bed and the development of the lens.

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