

## A CASE OF CONGENITAL SYPHILITIC AORTITIS.

By OSKAR KLOTZ, *Assistant Pathologist, Royal Victoria Hospital,  
Montreal, Canada.*

(PLATE IV. FIG. 1.)

THOUGH in recent years much stress has been laid on the occurrence of acquired specific lesions in the larger arteries, there has been remarkably little attention paid to the arterial lesions in congenital syphilis. Of the latter condition there have been several reports of the changes found in the omphalic vessels, by Winkel, Birch-Hirschfeld, and Chiari, while there are also descriptions, in the literature, of changes occurring under similar conditions in the veins.

Now that we know that the syphilitic virus passes from the mother to the fœtus, and that all the fœtal tissues become infected as they do in the acquired disease, it is to be expected that the lesions in the two instances will bear some similarity, save that the less resistant tissues of the fœtus will be damaged the more severely.

Our knowledge of acquired syphilitic aortitis has been especially added to by the reports of Heller and his pupils. They pointed out that the syphilitic affections of the aorta have certain characteristics which are constant. The syphilitic lesions, they reported, are most frequently found in the ascending aorta; and these lesions, when viewed from the intimal surface, show a peculiar scarring, with deep furrows and an extensive endothelial proliferation. Fatty degeneration of the vessel wall was seldom seen in these areas, and calcification almost never.

In 1885 Doehle first described the microscopical changes taking place in syphilitic arteritis, and in the main his descriptions have been accepted by later workers. A constant inflammatory infiltration is found present about the vasa vasorum, even in the earliest lesions. This inflammatory zone lies in the adventitia and the outer third of the media, and in itself is quite characteristic in syphilis. It may be that, when Koester was describing the mesarteritis as the usual affection of beginning arterio-sclerosis, he had before him specimens of syphilitic arteritis, and that it was from such that he drew the general conclusions concerning arterio-sclerosis. It is agreed by all authors that in syphilitic arteritis the intimal proliferation is a process secondary to the medial change.

Mraček noted in congenital syphilis that there were numerous ecchymoses in the adventitia of the larger vessels, while the vasa vasorum exhibited a small-celled infiltration about them. Occasionally, too, he noted a slight endarteritis in the carotid, crural, and iliac arteries. Buchta reported a case of congenital syphilis in a young adult of 17, in whom the vessels of the arms