

CLEFT PALATE AND HARE LIP. A monograph by W. Arbuthnot Lane, M.S.F.R.C.S., Surgeon to Guy's Hospital, London, Eng.

This is a recently published monograph by this distinguished surgeon. It is issued in quarto form, and printed in very large and legible type which it is a pleasure to read. The illustrations also are numerous and well executed.

The subject of Cleft Palate is chiefly dealt with, and the author puts in a strong plea for early operation before the eruption of primary teeth. This is contrary to the generally accepted views regarding the treatment of these congenital deformities. No less an authority than Mr. Treves states in his "System of Surgery" that "whilst it is never wise to operate on a child under three years of age, the time of election is from this age up to six years."

After a careful perusal of Mr. Lane's monograph we are inclined to agree with him when he says "The best time to operate is the day after birth, or as soon after that as possible. The newly born child is always healthy, the capacity of its tissues to repair being at the very best; its digestion has not been impaired by experimental and usually most unsatisfactory feeding, and its resisting power reduced correspondingly; it is apparently uninfluenced by the operation in that it does not cry or show evidences of being in pain; it is never sick after the anæsthetic, but takes its food within an hour or two of the completion of the operation with apparent enjoyment; the loss of blood is very slight, and the risk to life is under ordinary conditions very trivial indeed."

Other arguments in favour of early operation are these: the abnormality is an arrest in development, and therefore the sooner the parts are placed in their natural positions the more likely is development to proceed along normal lines, and if the palate is reconstructed before the child attempts to talk the voice will not acquire the quality which is spoken of as "nasal".

In these operations the individual skill of the surgeon is a very prominent factor, and Mr. Lane's method of operating is very clearly set forth in numerous illustrations of the formation of flaps and the special instruments employed.

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